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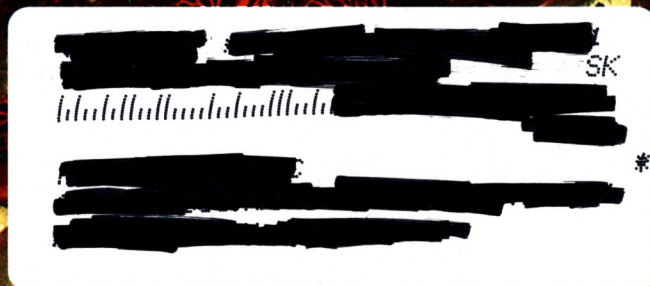
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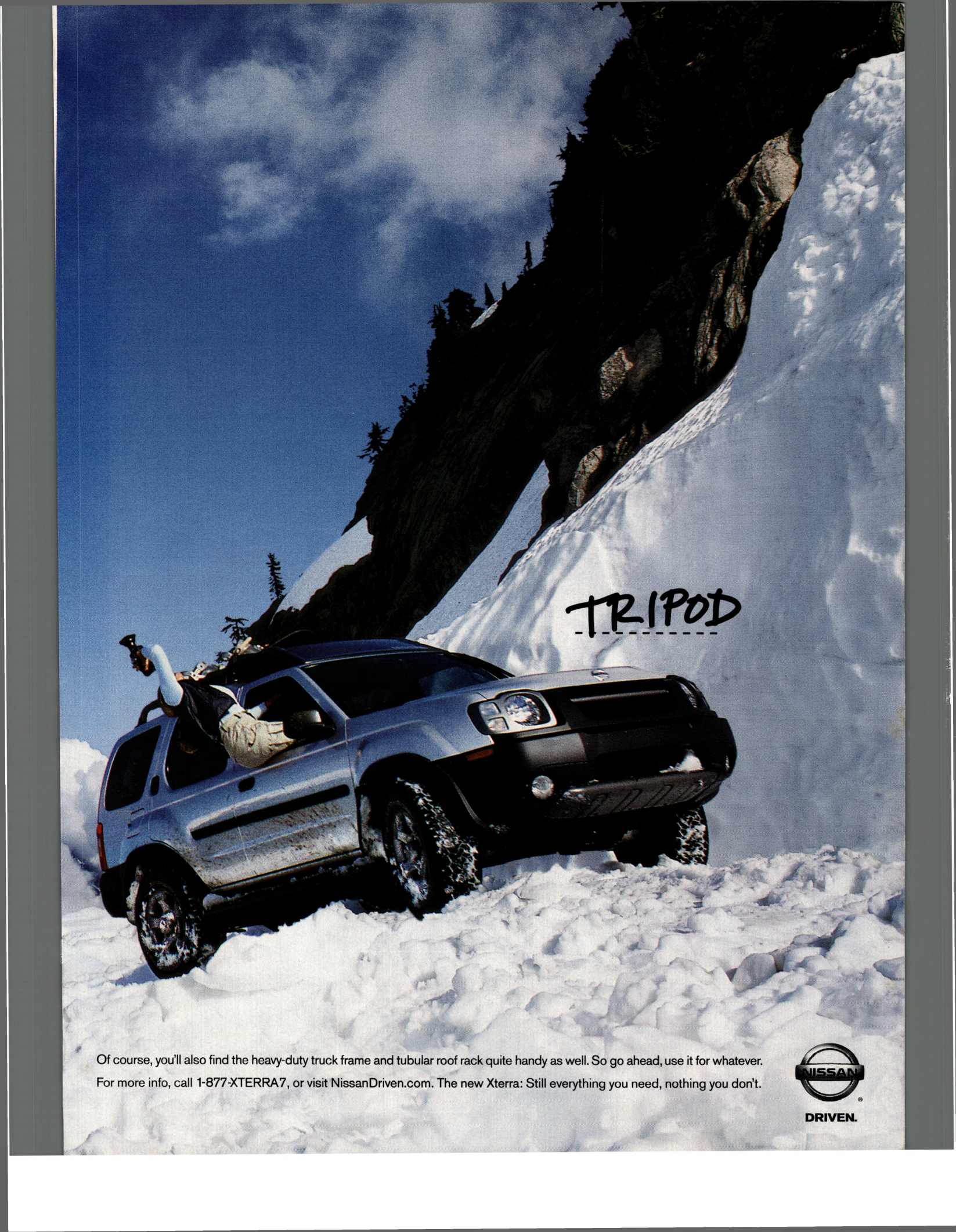




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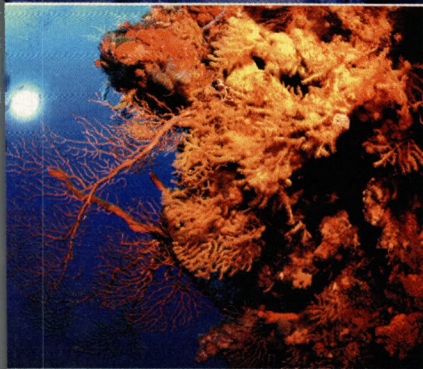
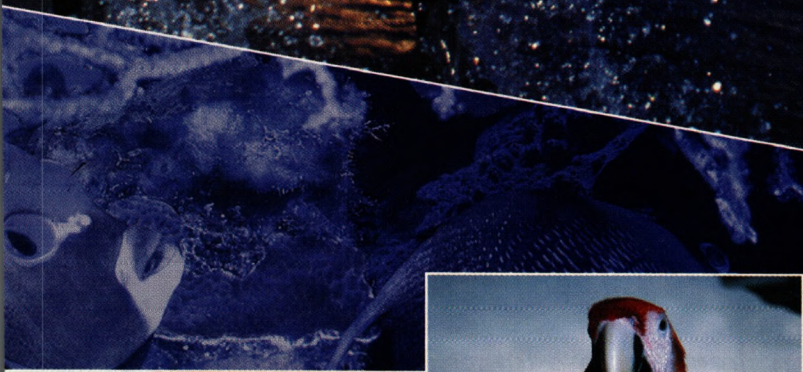
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#### 58 TRAVELS WITH NEVIN

Sipping from a flute filled with the finest bubbly, FRED "F. SCOTT" GARTH jets off to Dominica with his loyal man-servant, Nevin.

#### 61 KINGDOM OF THE SMALL

Often, it's the small things in life that really matter, and as BONNIE J. CARDONE discovers in Bonaire, the same can be said for the creatures of the sea.





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### ABOUT THE COVER:

1st Annual Cover Contest Winner, Katherine Smith's shot of Glassy Sweepers in waters near Matangi Island, in the northern section of the Fiji Islands. *Congratulations!*

Background photo:  
Scenic serenity on one of Grenada's beaches.  
Photo: Brad Doane

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**BAHAMAS** It's like the Lifetime Channel's "Intimate Portrait," except Simon Rogerson wasn't interviewing the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow. Instead, he set out to Walker's Cay to get personal with "the most dangerous shark in the world," the Bull Shark. Turns out Mr. Bull is rather shy and uninterested in man-eating our writer (page 50).

**BONAIRE** Someone once said, "It's the small things in life that make life worth living." And such is the case in diving, too. In Bonaire, spotting seahorses, cleaner shrimp and Secretary Blennies can certainly make a dive worth diving (page 61).

**CAYMAN ISLANDS** Men could learn a few things from the Sergeant Majors in the Cayman Islands. They build an impressive abode, swim figure-eights around their prospective mate and "chirp"...very effective. The Cay-



mans just happen to be some of the best spots to pick up on the quirky behaviors of marine critters. Learn the workings of the U/W society (page 47).

**DOMINICA** Between mud baths and facials, Fred "F. Scott" Garth and his assistant, Nevin, set out to find pure excitement. With Nevin's envious

Web surfing abilities and F. Scott's infectious need for adventure, the boys donned Rasta wear, got goosed while champagne snorkeling and pondered the fountain of youth. (page 58).

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC** Hop on-board a skiff in the Silver Bank and shove off. Can you smell it? Can you feel it? The skiff is seesawing and the air is thick with a scent that means only one



thing: Humpback Whales. They rock your world, squeeze your heart and tickle your belly. Oh, what a feeling. If only they could bottle it (page 57).

**GRENADA** Just jump in and let the gentle drift of Grenada's blue waters take you past incredible corals, nestling Nurse Sharks and curious pufferfish. Then swim in hot springs, climb a mountain and dive the *Bianca C* (page 44).



**ST. VINCENT** Two words: Frogfish Soup. That pretty much sums up what Deb Fugitt and her Texan photo friends recently ran into on St. Vincent. So many frogfish, they ran out of film and cried "Uncle!". But don't be fooled. There's much more to it: Red Banded Lobsters, Peppermint Shrimp, Teardrop Crabs...(page 54).







## CONTRIBUTORS

Recently christened Field Editor of *Skin Diver*, **MARTY SNYDERMAN** has dived and photographed nearly every molecule of water in the world's oceans. With his column, Ask the Pro, Marty shares his secrets and sheds light on the inner workings of an award-winning underwater photographer. But sometimes we like to get him out and about. This month, Marty visits the Cayman Islands, where he learns to appreciate not only the incredible wall diving, but the unique behavioral patterns of its marine life. Marty also checked in on the Dominican Republic, where he came face to face with the leviathan of the sea: the Humpback Whale. 🐋



In a selfless pursuit of Grenada's many natural splendors, **GRANVILLE GREENE** (left) and **BRAD DOANE** (right) immersed themselves in the mineral rich, clay-brown waters of a natural hot spring inside the Grand Etang Forest Reserve (sounds like a day at the spa to us). There, they stumbled upon an American expatriate and self-proclaimed "Rastafarian" who had turned his back on suburban Florida and moved to the island he lovingly referred to as "Greeenada, mon." 🐋

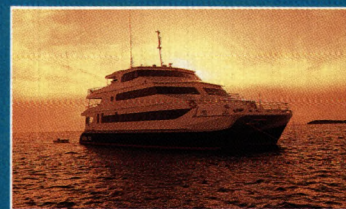
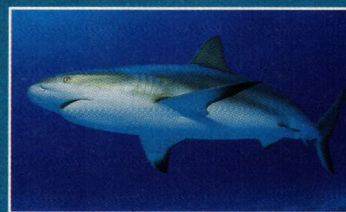
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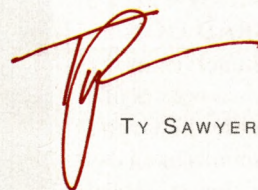


# September 11, 2001

I AM STRUGGLING WITH THIS EDITORIAL BECAUSE OF THE DATE AND TITLE YOU SEE ABOVE.

Due to lead times in magazine publishing, I am writing this two days after terrorists horrifically attacked the United States. We here at *Skin Diver* have wept for our countrymen and friends who were killed, been inspired by the heroism of the rescuers, and felt deep anger at those who assaulted our freedom and nation. Frankly, I feel a little guilty thinking about white sand beaches, warm water and cozy resorts. And at the same time, I'm struggling with the question of how it will impact the world of diving. Because it will. The events of September 11, 2001, will forever change how we live and travel. But change does not mean stop. Diving is what we do, what we love and how many of us live. I think this is important to remember. Our lives should not stop. But as I write this, I have no clue as to the state of the world come December, the month this issue will be published. I hope that when this issue reaches your homes, we have—as a country, a world and individually—found resolution.

We have a tremendous issue this month, and I truly hope it helps you think beyond—but not forget—the terrible tragedy that has befallen our lives. It is a great honor and privilege to be American, and I am proud to know that our country has indeed, stood undivided. 🐟



TY SAWYER, EDITOR



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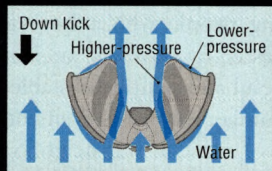
## performance chart >>>

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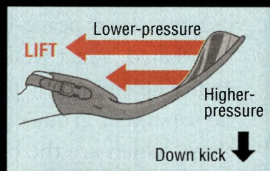
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Traditional fins only use repulsive force to create propulsion. This normally means that in order to create strong propulsion, maximum effort is required, resulting in muscle fatigue not only for beginners, women, and middle-aged divers, but professionals as well. Added to which, the body moves left and right in reaction to the kicking needed to move forward, thus reducing propulsion.



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### A Lasting Impression

Having just read the article in *Skin Diver* titled "WDHOF [Women Divers Hall of Fame] Members in the Navy" [Freeflow, Oct. 2001], I was delighted to see a familiar face in the picture. Donna Tobias, seated and being outfitted in the deep sea diving rig, brought back memories of one of the toughest and most rewarding five-week periods in my life. I met Ms. Tobias (then Petty Officer Tobias) while she was one of my instructors in the Navy Scuba School in Groton, CT, in the fall of 1978. I remember being instantly impressed with her accomplishments. I only had to see the Hard Hat diver pin on her OD [Olive Drab] green fatigues to know that we were in the company of someone very special.

That was over 23 years ago, but I can still remember Ms. Tobias putting us through the morning PT [Physical Training], the 2-mile swims, the "buddy line," the black-out drills, drown-proofing pool sessions and much more to ensure that those of us wanting to be a Navy diver could be one. Ms. Tobias' grit and determination were contagious, and those who were fortunate to have caught it, went on to graduate.

I must say that having inducted her into the Women Divers Hall of Fame lends a great deal of validation and credibility to the organization. Several of their accomplished members I have met personally over the years, but to me there has always been one woman in diving that I have respected above all others. Congratulations, Ms. Tobias.

—Howard Alexander, via e-mail

### Tribute to a Hero

On September 11th, my brave cousin, Firefighter Christopher Mozzillo, entered the World Trade Center to save lives, doing the job he loved. We haven't heard from him since, and as we all know, he died a hero.

He was an avid scuba diver and a big fan of your magazine. Publishing this



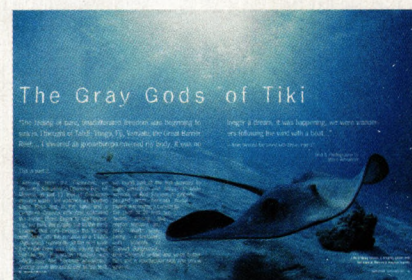
## Readers Speak Out

letter in *Skin Diver* would be a nice tribute to a wonderful man and hero. Thank you.

—Nancy Carrieri, Brooklyn, NY

### Reading Under the Influence

After getting lost in Steve Alexander's latest piece on Tahiti ["The Gray Gods of Tiki," Around the World With Steve, Part 2, Sept. 2001] I've been doing some serious reevaluating. This guy's out on the open ocean, feeding sardines to stingrays, while I sit behind 3 feet of mahogany and a pile of spreadsheets. It's just not fair! I'm now considering quitting



my job, selling my house and kids (or perhaps just loaning them out), and trading it all in for a 60-foot sailboat and a Scottish terrier named Bull. It's true adventure, man, that boils the blood! And I love a magazine that supports this thinking. Keep it up.

—Travis Candill, Topeka, KS

P.S.—I told my wife about my plans, and she's holding you responsible.

### A Word from the Maldives

Greetings from the crew of *Manthiri* and the management of the company.

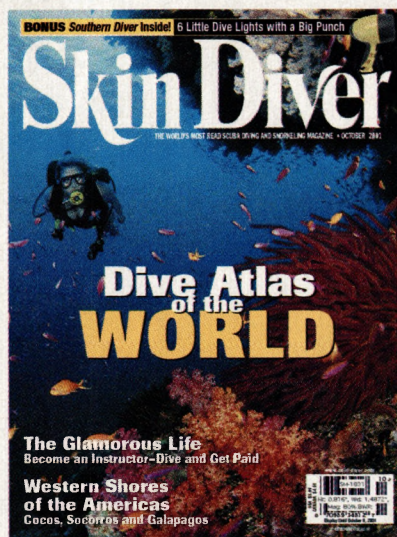
We are shocked and outraged by the senseless acts of terrorism on the World Trade Center in NYC and the Pentagon

in Washington, D.C.—unheard of crimes in these times of peace. September 11th will remain painfully etched in the civilized memory. This is an act of barbarism, not only against Americans, but against humanity. We Maldivians share America's anger and sorrow. Our prayers are with the bereaved.

Some of our clients and old friends have written us or phoned to ask whether it is safe to travel to our part of the world and Muslim countries. Maldives is a Muslim country, but we are a peace-loving people who abhor violence and bloodshed, a fact well attested by travelers, ancient and modern. The country is peaceful and politically stable. There are no separatist groups or fundamentalist movements here, like those which are the bane of some of our neighbors.

We would like to assure you that if there is one country in the world which is safe to travel, then it is the independent Republic of Maldives.

—Ibrahim Hussain Manik, Galolhu, Maldives 🐟





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## Skin Diver's 1st Annual Cover Contest And the winner is...

SKIN DIVER READERS OVERWHELMED OUR MAILROOM WITH AMAZING IMAGES IN AN EFFORT TO WIN THE 1ST ANNUAL Cover Contest. Our staff selected five finalists, then the winner was chosen on Skin Diver Online by our readers.

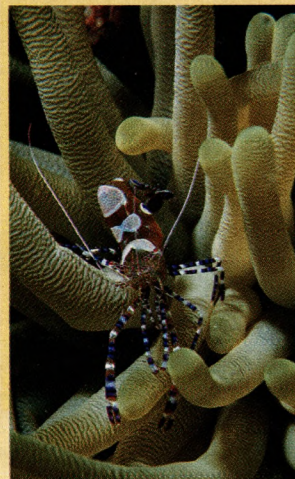
### Runner-Ups



Douglas Fisher (Ontario, CA)  
*Anemone Clownfish*



Masataka Takeda (Osaka, Japan)  
*Silhouette of turtle*



Ernest Manewal (Sitka, AK)  
*Spotted Cleaner Shrimp, Bonaire*



Don Brown (Hilo, HI)  
*"Leru Cut," Solomon Islands*

Katherine Smith's image received 48 percent of the total votes, and graces the cover of our December subscriber issues. The contest yielded an incredible showing of brilliant underwater photography from around the globe. Congratulations to everyone; we hope to see more of your work next year! 🐟 —THC



### 1st Place Winner

Katherine Smith (Houma, LA)  
*Glassy Sweepers, Matangi Island, Fiji*



## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW

### WOMEN DIVERS HALL OF FAME™

BEGINNING IN 2002, THE WDHOF will award four scholarships every March.

- The WDHOF Scholarship: A \$500 scholarship awarded to a deserving female diver. This scholarship is to be used for any educational program in the dive industry.

- The Hillary Viders Scholarship: A \$2,500 scholarship awarded to any female diver or non-diver who is enrolled in an accredited college level marine science program.

- The Lifeguard Systems (LGS) Scholarship: LGS, through their non-profit organization, RIPTIDE, will



## cayman goes country

YOU MIGHT NOT THINK IT, BUT twangy singin' and great divin' go together like biscuits and butter. And from August 2 through 11, the Cayman Islands hosted an annual event billed as "Cayman Country," which brought a number of hot country music acts down to the quintessential Caribbean paradise, where intimate acoustic performances were held for a handful of lucky radio contest winners and visiting divers.

This scuba and songfest has been held for the past three years, although under a different moniker. This year, the event seemed to find its stride. Nowhere was this more evident than on Seven Mile Beach, where singer Blake Shelton, regaled in tight denim and a wide-brimmed hat, released a frisky young Hawksbill from the Cayman Turtle Farm into open water. As waves lapped at his boots, Shelton, who also had his first number one single on the country charts that week, watched with almost parental concern as his selected turtle struggled down the sand and into the waves.

Cayman Country featured a number of artists, including Rascal Flats; striking twin sisters, The Kinleys; mother and daughter duo, The Bakers; as well as solo acts Chris Cagle, country powerhouse Travis Tritt and others. However, the trio of the Wilkinsons was the group at the heart of this event. Passionate scuba divers all, the

**Clockwise from top: Releasing at Cayman Turtle Farm; the Wilkinsons in concert; divers get ready to go under.**

entire Wilkinson clan has been visiting the Cayman Islands for more than five years. While other acts stay at Grand Cayman's more plush hotels, the Wilkinsons preferred the diver-friendly facilities of Sunset House.

The Wilkinsons' digs also put them right next door to the Seaview Hotel, where each night artists played open-air performances to a couple hundred salty, sun-burnt bubble blowers. All of who seemed to agree that the only thing better than listening to great tunes, was cruising the big blue. And what better place than the Cayman Islands, where turtles are as plentiful as midridges at a Shania Twain concert. 🐟

—Daryl Carson

*For information on the Cayman Islands and future events, visit [www.caymanislands.ky](http://www.caymanislands.ky). Cayman Country was sponsored in part by PADI. For more information on PADI, visit [www.padi.com](http://www.padi.com).*

support for women of all ages, particularly those preparing for professional careers in diving.

All four scholarships will be presented on March 24, 2002, at the Beneath the Sea Exposition in Secaucus, NJ. The deadline for applications is February 1, 2002. 🐟

—Hillary Vidars

*For WDHOF scholarship requirements and information about the WDHOF, visit [www.wdhof.org](http://www.wdhof.org).*

award unlimited courses for a full year to a qualified female diver.

- The ISAM Scholarship: The International Society of Aquatic Medicine will award an annual \$500 scholarship to a female medical, dental, nursing or other allied health professional student, to be used toward ISAM Continuing Medical Education meetings.

The WDHOF is an organization providing educational and financial

## Remembering Jon Hardy

JON S. HARDY, A SCUBA DIVING pioneer, died after a short battle with cancer. He was 62.

Jon started diving in the early '50s and had over 10,000 dives under his belt. He taught diving on Catalina, was in the Navy, and eventually went on to join NAUI, where he served as their executive director, writing the NAUI instructor manual and assisting in the curriculum and instructor-training procedures for SSI.

Jon lived in Avalon, Catalina, since 1980, and was very active in helping develop the Catalina diving industry. He started his own charter boat business (Argo Diving Services),



was a volunteer crew member at the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber, served various terms as President of the Catalina Island Museum Society and as President of the Catalina Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, in 1981 Jon was co-founder of the Avalon Underwater Cleanup.

Jon was well-known and respected as an expert witness in court cases involving diving accidents. He frequently shared his findings and thoughts through various mediums, including the monthly column he wrote for *Rodale's Scuba Diving*, "Lessons for Life." Jon was also director of Scubalab for *Rodale's*.

I first met Jon in 1980 when I was doing a crossover training course. During this course, Jon and I dived a quarry under the poorest conditions: no viz, no marine life. Over the next 21 years, Jon would introduce me as "the guy who took me on the worst dive ever." I will miss it.

Jon is survived by a son, a daughter and a grandson. Donations in his memory can be made either to the Catalina Hyperbaric Chamber (P.O. Box 5069, Avalon, CA 90704) or to the Avalon Municipal Hospital (P.O. Box 1563, Avalon, CA 90704). 🐟

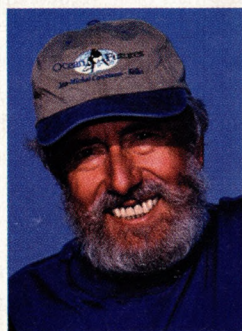
—Ken Kurtis



BY JEAN-MICHEL COUSTEAU

FOR SOME TIME NOW, I HAVE VOICED MY concerns over a new military technology called active sonar.

The U.S. Navy has developed this technology to locate and track submarines in the oceans of the world. Typically, an array of speakers is towed from a ship, sending out low frequency signals to locate subs wherever in the world they



may be located. The signals are unimaginably potent. A signal sent from California, for example, may be picked up in Japan.

The problem is that this noise harms marine mammals. Fatally so.

Last year, 16 whales were stranded along the coast of the Bahamas. Four different species were represented, washed ashore individually and in groups. Nine of these animals returned to sea, but seven died. Necropsies on these whales revealed bleeding in the ears—signs of auditory trauma.

Not coincidentally, a U.S. Navy battle group was nearby, operating a mid-frequency “active” sonar. A subsequent investigation demonstrated that the sonar had in fact caused the whales to strand, or even outright die. The entire resident population of Cuvier’s Beaked Whales disappeared during this event.

Yet despite overwhelming evidence that these technologies pose a direct threat to whale, dolphin and seal populations, the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the agency responsible for the protection of marine mammals, is poised to permit expanded use of low frequency active sonar (LFA) in U.S. waters.

The Navy is seeking permission for an “inci-

## Whale Song Silenced by Navy Sonar

dental take” of a certain number of marine mammals while operating LFA—an exemption from the Marine Mammal Protection Act and its moratorium on harassing whales, dolphins and seals. Such permission is not automatic. In keeping with the Marine Mammal Protection Act, applicants for an exemption to the moratorium must satisfy stringent conditions.

According to the NMFS, the Navy has satisfied these conditions. The Proposed Rule would allow the Navy to deploy LFA in the near future.

But critics of LFA, including the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), believe that the Proposed Rule itself violates the letter and the spirit of the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

The 1972 law states that such takings should be “infrequent, unavoidable or accidental.”

Active sonar systems being developed by the U.S. Navy have caused significant auditory trauma, and even death, to whales.



PHOTO: TONY ORLANDI/MAG PHOTOS/JOHN F. PIZZOLI



They should take place within a small geographical area and have a "negligible impact" upon the species as a whole. What is negligible? According to the law, "so small...as to warrant little or no intention."

LFA clearly fails this test.

The impacts promise to be frequent and intentional, and they are avoidable. The geographical area of LFA activity—the global ocean—is hardly limited. As for "negligible impact," the Navy itself reckons on a yearly take of 10 percent of Beaked Whales in the Mediterranean, 12 percent of Elephant Seals in the eastern North Pacific and 16 percent of Blue Whales in the eastern north Atlantic.

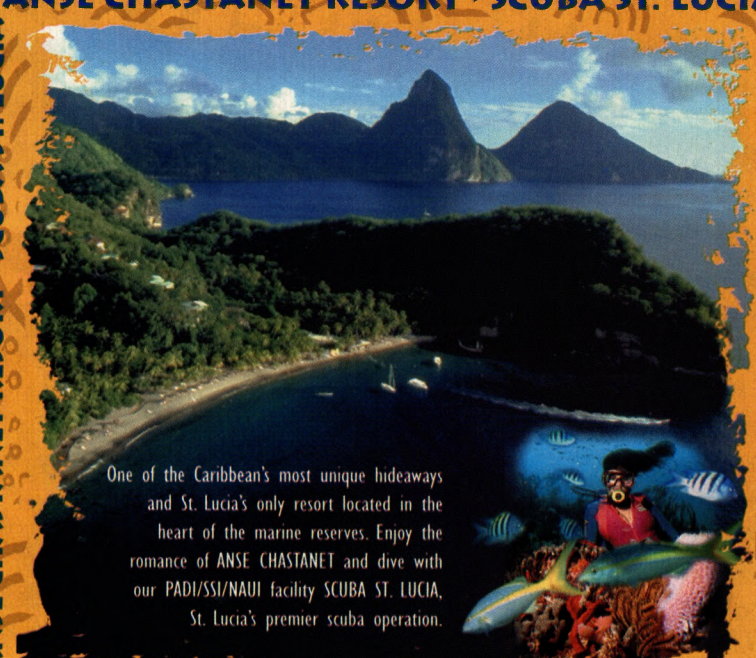
The Proposed Rule is further riddled with inconsistencies, omissions and a bias toward the Navy's position.

For example, NMFS relies heavily on the Navy's own scientific findings, not on independent, published, peer-reviewed literature. As a result, the agency underestimates the potential for auditory and non-auditory damage to marine mammals. It also ignores impacts on other endangered animals, such as Dugongs and Northern Right Whales. Partly, this is a result of ambiguous statistics that serve to underestimate the actual level and range of noise produced by active sonar.

In some instances, the agency seems willing to warp its own mandate in order to approve LFA. It raises the standard for "harassment," so that LFA will pass muster. And the agency fails to adequately explore alternatives to full-blown deployment of LFA. Such alternatives, which would diminish the damaging effects of active sonar, include turning down the volume while maintaining effectiveness, relocating tests to "desert" areas known to be unpopulated by marine mammals, and using available advanced *passive* sonar devices.

No one disputes the Navy's genuine need to identify and track perceived threats. But many are beginning to question whether information gathering has to be as damaging as war itself. 🐟

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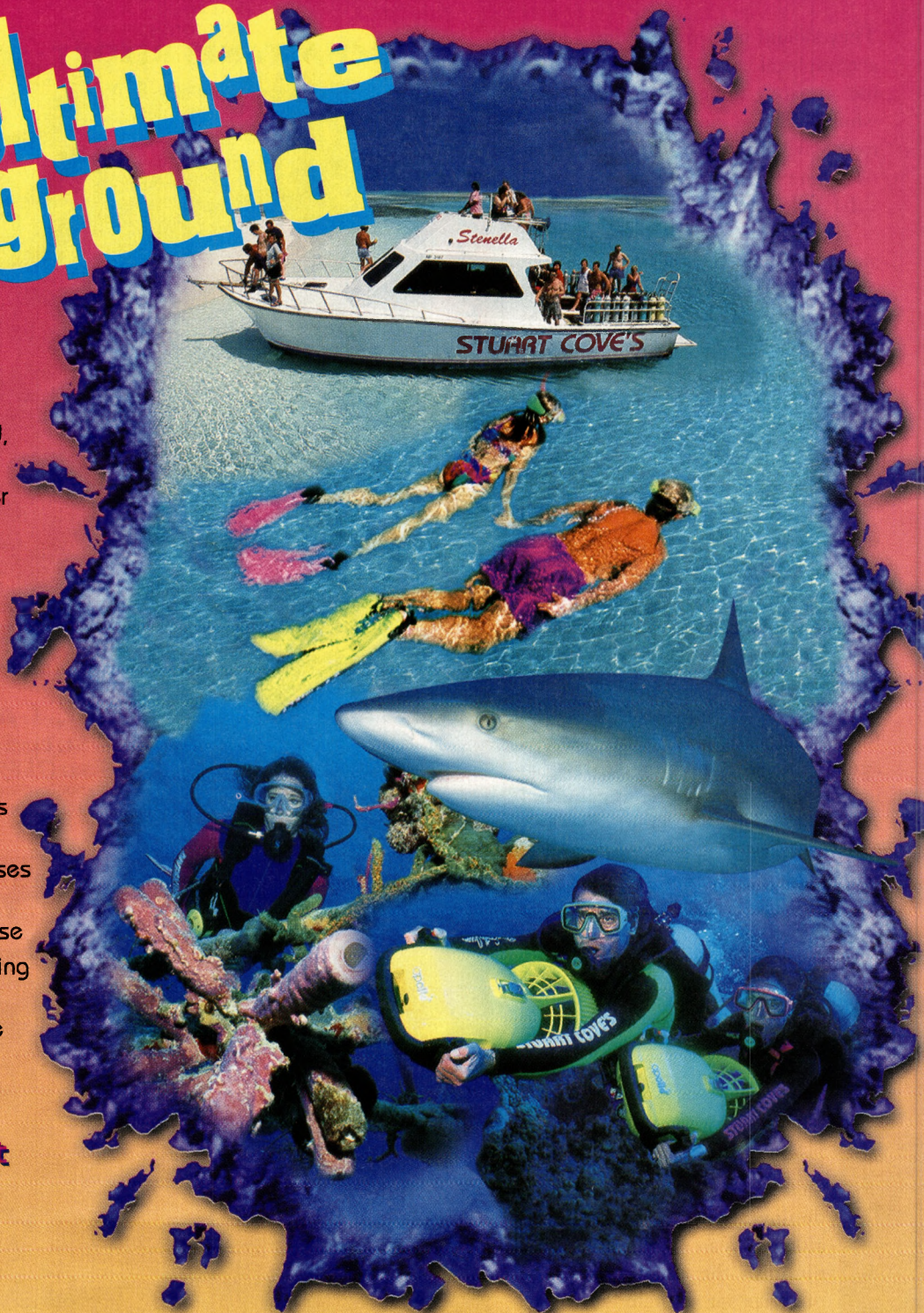
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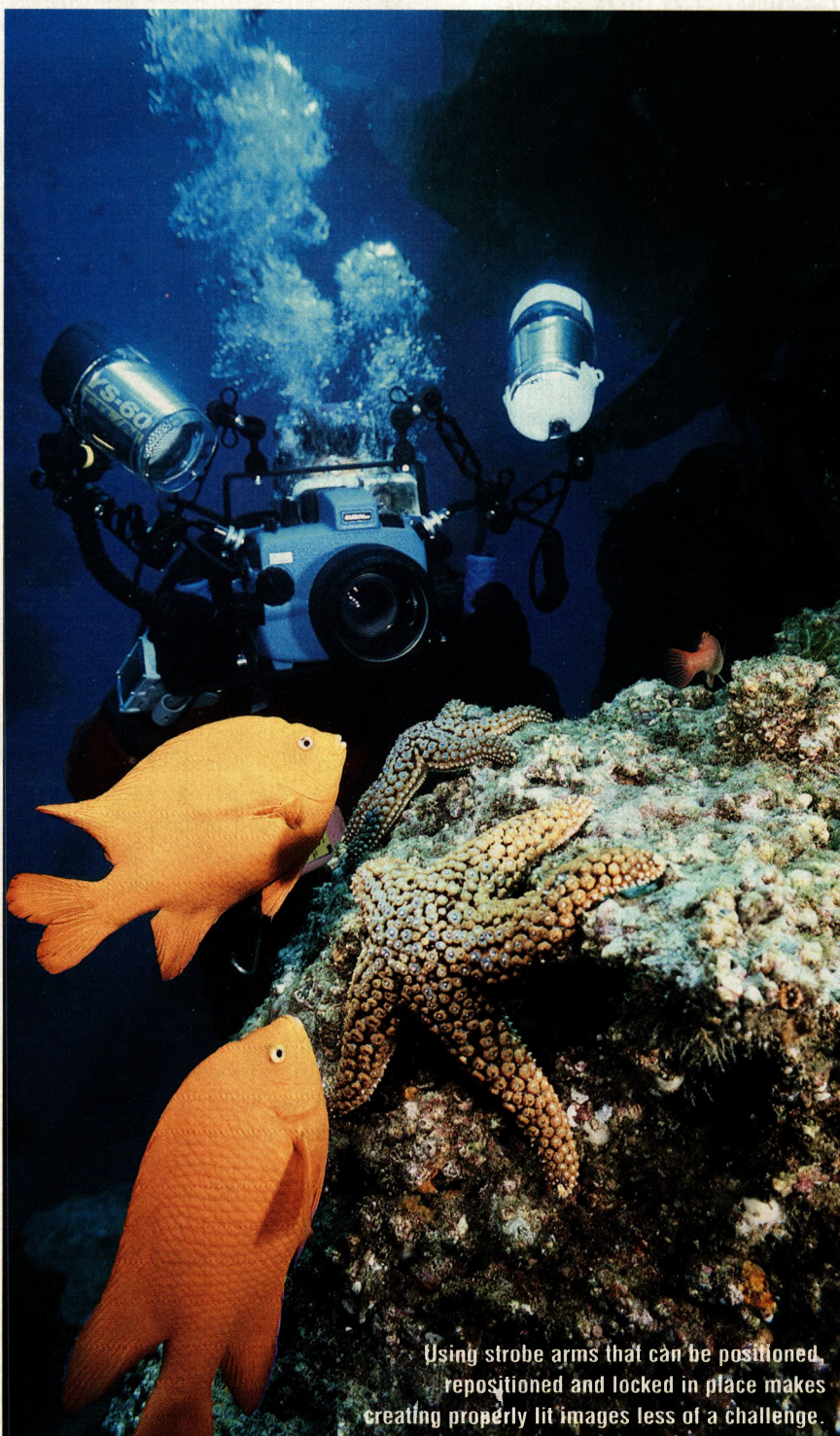




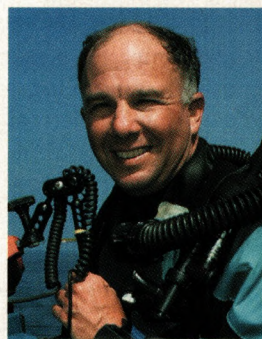
# Strobe Arms: The Overlooked Component

BY MARTY SNYDERMAN

*Some friends advise me to handhold my strobe, others tell me that using some kind of flexible arm is the best way to go. What is your advice? —Allan J., Sacramento, CA*



Using strobe arms that can be positioned, repositioned and locked in place makes creating properly lit images less of a challenge.



ASK THE PRO

FOR MANY YEARS I USED A PAIR OF strobes that were mounted on arms for my macro work, and handhold a single strobe when creating wide-angle images. I was reasonably pleased with my macro lighting, but all too often I was disappointed with the lighting in my wide-angle shots. In trying to determine the reason for my wide-angle lighting problems, I concluded that I often misaimed my strobe. I began to watch other photographers who were handholding their strobe, and it didn't take long to see that I was not alone. Many photographers are not as accurate in aiming a handheld strobe as they think they are.

The entire process was a great learning experience for me, because as I watched other photographers, I soon realized that few actually looked away from their viewfinder to check on the position and lighting angle of their strobe. Instead, they positioned and aimed by feel and intuition. And for those that did bother to check the position of their strobe, they unintentionally moved their strobe into a less desirable position as soon as they looked back into their viewfinder and began to consider other factors. The bottom line was that frequently the same folks that could easily shut their eyes and place food on a fork dead center in their mouth badly missed their



target with a wide-angle strobe.

So for standard lighting situations, I became a firm believer that using high-quality, articulated strobe arms that are easy to position, reposition and lock into place is the best way to go. Allan might want to handhold a strobe when sidelighting and backlighting, but for standard frontlighting, I highly recommend using a strobe arm or arms.

When creating macro images, I recommend positioning strobes in close to your lens and subject. You want your camera system to be as compact as possible and, at the same time, you want to get your strobes close to your subject in order to maximize the depth of field. When using a wide-angle system, I recommend unfurling the articulated arms and positioning the strobes slightly

above and as far to the side of your subject as possible. In addition, try placing your strobes a few inches behind the film plane in order to avoid unwanted flare on the side of a frame, which results from having a strobe placed too close to your

...try placing your  
strobes a few inches  
behind the film plane...

frame line. This positioning technique will help avoid ruinous backscatter.

Using firmly locked down strobe arms will also help you edge light—a technique in which skilled photographers try to light their subject with the

inside portion of the light from their strobes, while not illuminating the out-of-focus particles that are between the film and the subject in order to minimize backscatter. When using high-quality, articulated arms such as those made by UltraLight Control Systems and Technical Lighting Control, you have the advantage of being able to lock your strobes into place underwater, then turning your camera system around so you can see exactly where your strobes are positioned and aimed. At that point, you can make any needed adjustments.

When you then turn the system around again into the shooting position, you can have the confidence to know that your strobes will be properly positioned, allowing you to concentrate on composition and other things. 🐟

## Shorten Your Learning Curve...And Have Fun While You Do

At the risk of sounding like the company hack, I want to tell you about a great new way to improve your underwater photography and have a ton of fun in the process. I just returned home from The First Annual Roatan U/W Photo/Video Championship, and even at the end of a frenetic week in Honduras, I am still buzzed. Participants created some superb images, and there were great prizes awarded to those who produced the top photographs. However, the best part of the week was the shared enthusiasm for underwater photography, and the amazing photographic progress made by the attendees.

So what does this have to do with you? Well, this championship was the first in a series of photographic events that *Skin Diver* is sponsoring in various destinations around the world. Kona, HI, is scheduled for next spring and Roatan will host its Second Annual Championship next summer. While these destinations have their own unique charm and appeal, the central themes of all the events will be for everyone to share their enthusiasm for underwater photography, improve the quality of their images, go diving, enjoy some prizes and

have fun meeting other shutterbugs.

During the week-long events, seminars will be given by a number of wide-



ly known photo pros. Attendees will receive some personal photographic advice, have an opportunity to try some new gear and shoot lots of film. Ultimately, there is nothing that can help you improve the quality of your underwater photography more than shooting and evaluating a lot of film over a short period of time. That kind of opportunity can only be enhanced by

having a photo pro around to bounce questions off of.

In Roatan, participants stayed at a number of resorts, including Anthony's Key Resort, Bay Islands Beach Resort, Coco View, Fantasy Island Beach Resort and aboard the Bay Islands *Aggressor*. Photo pros Rick Frehsee, David Fleetham, Jim Church, Steve Simonsen and I stayed at the various resorts, so each property had an attending pro to serve as a coach during the week. Local video pro, Tim Bland helped out as well. In addition, we all gathered together to attend photo pro seminars and ask them questions.

It was great diving, mouth-watering food, the beauty and charm of Roatan and plenty of fun! Attendees were photographers at various levels. All equally welcome, as the themes of camaraderie, fun and helping everyone improve their photography provided the ambiance. As will be the case at future events, we celebrated the winners, but this wasn't a "win at all costs" kind of event.

If you want to shorten your learning curve and have fun in the process, join us at one of *Skin Diver's* upcoming Photo Championships. Hope to see you there.

### WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT UNDERWATER PHOTOGRAPHY?

Take an online course at Marty Snyderman's School of Underwater Photography at [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com). This comprehensive course consists of nine interactive classes taken at your convenience.



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## HammerHeads Enter the Fun Zone

**HAMMERHEADS TAKE PRIDE** IN abiding by their own creative rules and regulations, affectionately known as their "Sacred Truths."



**M e m b e r s** demonstrated their passion for the "Truths" at the 2nd

Annual Fun Zone Trip to the Cayman Islands, which took place July 21 to 28, 2001. Following are just a few Sacred Truths that were clearly in place at this year's event:

**Sacred Truth #1:** Create fun events that encourage divers to get back in the water.

The Annual Fun Zone Trip was created to encourage divers from around the world to experience some of the world's best dive destinations. An exclusive airfare, hotel and dive trip package was offered to all members.

For this year's trip, Bob Soto's provided the staff and services for the journey to Grand Cayman.

**Sacred Truth #2:** Encourage diving through underwater imaging.

This year's Fun Zone Trip was sponsored in part by Kodak and Sea & Sea Underwater Photography. Kodak provided free use of film to all the members, and several took advantage of this offer by trying underwater photography for the first time.

**Sacred Truth #3:** Above all, have a blast in all that they do!

As part of their package, HammerHeads attended a number of fun theme parties, as well as a sunset cruise that divers agreed upon as "a complete blast."

For more information on the HammerHeads, contact Lydia Eldridge at (858) 616-6408, or check out [www.h-heads.com](http://www.h-heads.com).



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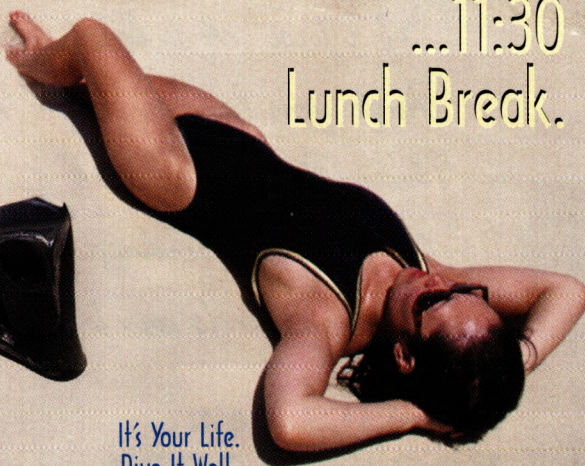
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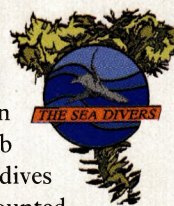


## The Sea Divers

**THE SEA DIVERS** IS A non-profit recreational scuba diving club based in Southern California. The club schedules 12-plus boat dives a year, offered at a discounted price. These boat dives include food and air fills, almost always make a minimum of four dives, are limited to 28 scuba divers, and reserved bunks/staterooms for club members.

The Sea Divers monthly general meetings are held at Round Table Pizza in Torrance, CA. Meetings usually feature a guest speaker. Upcoming topics are "Loving Dive Spots to Death" and "Everything You Wanted to Know About Free Diving." Other activities include beach clean-ups and fundraising for one of the area's hyperbaric chambers.

If you're interested in learning more and perhaps joining the group on its trip to the Northern Channel Isles in December, visit [www.tstonramp.com/~cbilling](http://www.tstonramp.com/~cbilling).



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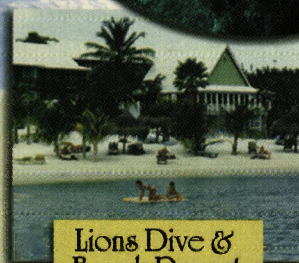
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Welcome to the Diver's Library, where each month we bring you the latest in diving media.

THE BEST THING ABOUT *Marine Life of the Pacific and Indian Oceans* by Gerald Allen and Roger Steene is that it doesn't make me feel the least bit stupid for not

knowing my marine critters or their appropriate names. Rather, the book reassures me with some friendly advice, "There's no need to panic at the site of unpronounceable scientific names that appear in this book.... There is seldom agreement on their pronunciation, even among scientists!" Hey, if scientists can't even get it straight, then I'm doing fine.

With this book to help me, words like *Tubastra faulkneri* don't intimidate me. Because I can rest assured that they're accompanied by a much

friendlier term like *Orange Daisy Coral*. Now, *that* I can understand. And, I can reference the clear and bright picture above the term to see that, gee, it really does look like a daisy. How clever. The book also explains what a *Toxopneustes pileolus* is and why the scientist who first worked on it almost lost his life. He was apparently too busy with the long scientific name and didn't have this book to tell him that what he was working with was a *Toxic Sea Urchin*.

Not only is *Marine Life of the Pacific and Indian Oceans* informative, but amusing, too. Sidebars with names like "The Wonderfully Weird World of the Assfish" offer opportunities for a childish giggle or two. And the photography takes the reader on a most fulfilling dive, all without getting wet. The book is an all-around success, as it has beautifully captured the exotic animals and plants of this region, their proper iden-

**Marine Life of the Pacific and Indian Oceans**

by Gerald Allen,  
photography by  
Roger Steene,  
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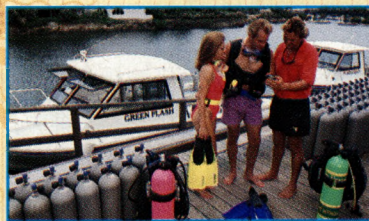
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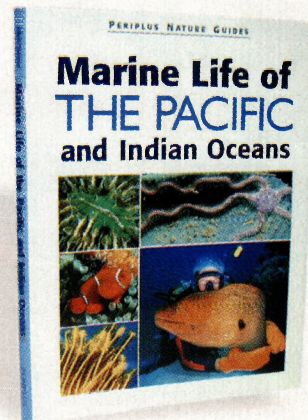
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tifications and still finds room to be interesting. The intriguing and brilliant photographs and light, colloquial language of this book make it easy and fun to learn about the Pacific and Indian Oceans' marine life. And I learned that I can be just as smart as any scientist, at least now that I've read this book! 🐟

For information on how to submit a product for review in Diver's Library, contact Kyle Foster at [fosterk@emapusa.com](mailto:fosterk@emapusa.com).





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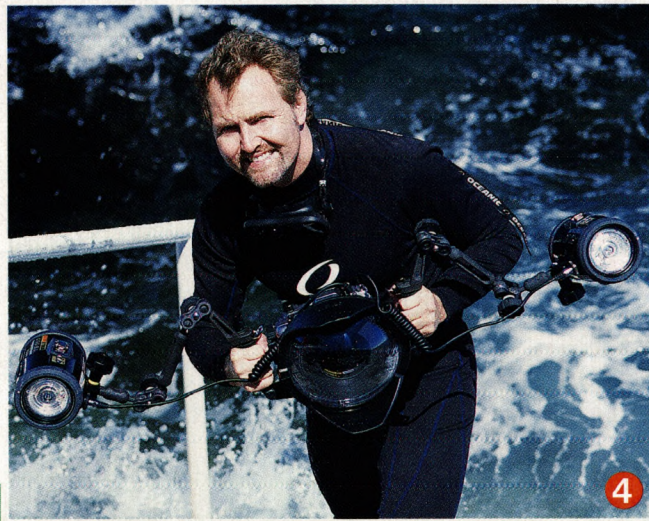
Theories abound regarding the whereabouts of old Saint Nick in the off-season. It's believed that, much like Major League Baseball, he holds a series of training camps to ramp up for the big day.

by Daryl Carson  
& Ryan Allen

Fortunately, one of *Skin Diver's* secret agents (all the best magazines have them) got a tip that Claus might be doing his dive-gear distribution training on Santa Catalina Island (no relation), off the coast of Southern California. Like CNN during the Gulf War, the *Skin Diver* camera crew showed up on the beaches to document the event. We found Claus tooling around in a decked out golf cart, bestowing gifts on the local bubble-blowers. When asked why he wasn't using his reindeer and sleigh, Claus cited the foot and mouth disease scare, saying he didn't want to place Rudolph and the gang at risk. *Skin Diver* did, however, get to peek inside Santa's dive duffel, and what we found were the hottest of holiday gifts.



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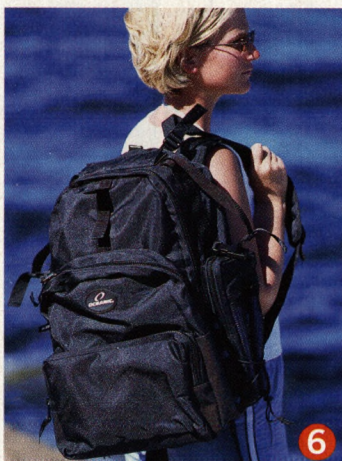


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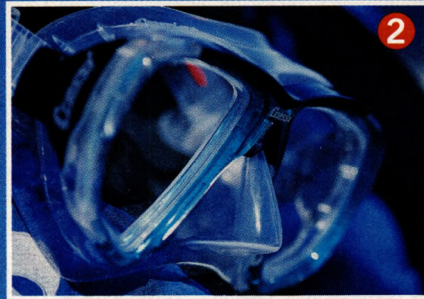
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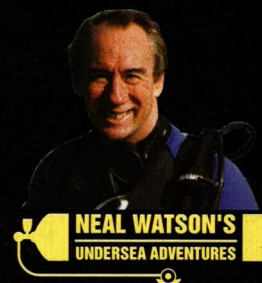
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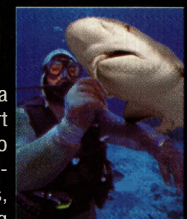
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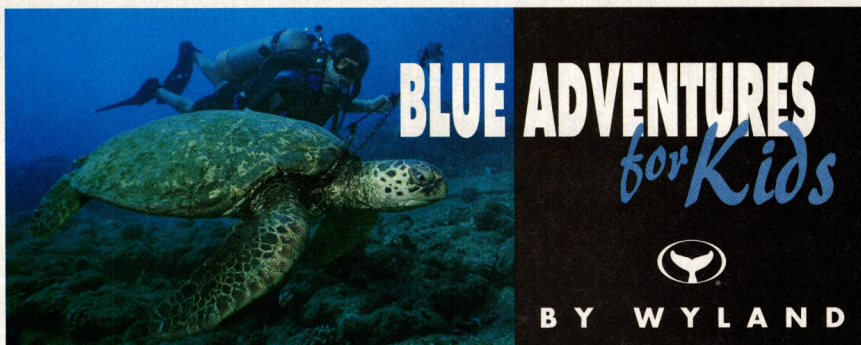
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## RETURN OF THE WHALES

IMAGINE YOU'VE TAKEN THE FAMILY out to the local buffet every night for the last three months. You're sitting around the table one evening, rolling your peas from one end of the plate to the other, maybe feeling a little fat and restless, when a strange idea pops into your head. For no reason at all, you suddenly announce that tomorrow you're packing up for an 8,000-mile swim down to Mexico.

That might sound crazy to you, but for thousands of California Gray Whales, it's an annual ritual. (Well, except for the part about the peas.) From late December to May, the whales leave their summer home above the Arctic Circle, north of Alaska, for the warm waters of Baja California for their breeding and calving season. This migra-

tion is one of the longest by any mammal in the world. After months of gorging themselves in the rich feeding grounds of the north, the whales are fit and strong enough to make the treacherous journey south. En route, they'll find little, if anything to eat, and will subsist on energy stored in their muscle, blubber and body fat. A month earlier, on the other side of the country, Humpback Whales in the North Atlantic undertake a slightly shorter migration to the birthing grounds on the Silver Bank, a marine sanctuary north of the Dominican Republic. The migration of whales to and from these places pre-

sents an incredible opportunity for families—human families, that is—to spend a few moments among these gigantic creatures and experience their beauty and gentle nature.

To me, there is probably nothing more fantastic than seeing a whale in its natural habitat. I saw my first whales in the wild when I was 14 years old, and the experience changed me forever. I had been standing in waist-deep water in Laguna Beach, CA, when two enormous barnacle encrusted backs broke the surface a few hundred yards offshore and spouted right

before my eyes. I felt as if I was seeing a living dinosaur. Anyone who has shared a similar experience will understand what I'm talking about. Fortunately, as more charter boats offer reasonable rates on whale



Humpback Whales have much to teach us.

watching excursions, these close encounters of the whale kind are now available to most any family that can get to the ocean. The charter boat captains have a good system for locating whales and, in most cases, a thorough understanding of whale behavior, which makes the day at sea educational and memorable.

There are also a few things you can do beforehand—like reading books, studying photos and watching films—to make the experience more engaging for your children. Then, once you're onboard, have them look for the blow or spout coming from the water. Challenge them to identify different types of whales by their



spouts. For example, California Gray Whales have a V-shaped spout because of their double blowhole. Teach your children the different diving patterns, too. Gray Whales surface to breathe two to four times before they take a deep dive, after which they'll stay under for about five minutes. And don't forget to point out that the dolphins, which are commonly seen riding the bow wake of the boat, are actually a small, toothed species of whale.

If you're lucky, you can simply stand back and watch in amazement some of the more spectacular behaviors like breaching. There is no sight in nature that can be compared with the image of a 40-ton Humpback Whale catapulting out of the water, then falling back to the surface with an enormous splash. I once saw a Humpback off the coast of Maui do this 40 times in a row—right next to our boat! We still don't know why whales en-

#### WHALE WATCH

Charter boats are a great way to see whales on their annual migrations. But if you should try to venture out in your own boat, here are a few tips to make your encounter a positive experience for you—and the whales.

- Keep your craft at least 110 yards from all whales.
- Never place your boat in a position that would make the whale alter its course or breathing patterns.
- Navigate a course parallel to the whale's course.
- Remember that Federal Law prohibits harassing marine mammals in U.S. waters.

gage in such acrobatics, but our lack of knowledge does nothing to diminish this incredible sight. Maybe they're showing off. Maybe they're taking delight in the successful completion of another long journey. Or maybe they're just happy thinking about those big delicious meals that await them at the end of their next trip. The truth is whales still have much to teach us. But by learning more about them and sharing your experience with others, you can be part of ongoing conservation efforts to ensure that they return again and again. 🐬

For more information about whale watching and for more ocean adventures with kids, visit [www.wyland.com](http://www.wyland.com).

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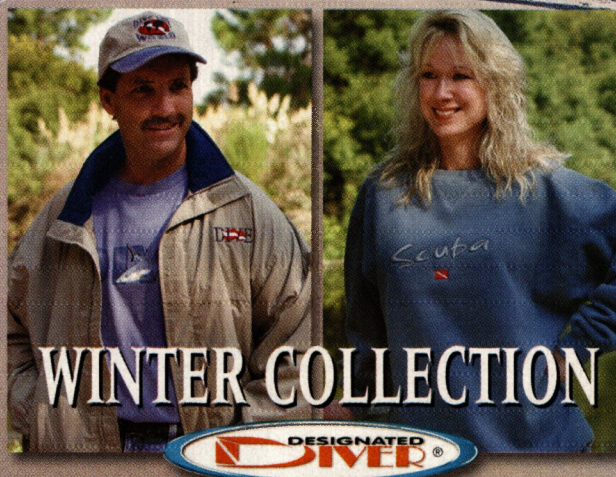
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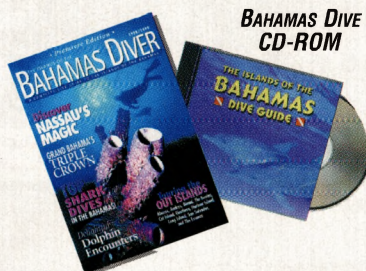


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# encounters Caribbean



A diver eases into the current as a large gorgonian sensually undulates in the flow. Inset below: A fisherman caught in contemplation of the setting sun.

# Adrift in the Isles of Spice

Grenada's laid back and rough-around-the-edges atmosphere lures savvy divers to this lush Caribbean outpost. TEXT BY GRANVILLE GREENE • PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRAD DOANE

**U**p on top of Belair Hill on the 13 square-mile island of Carriacou, Ricky Neckles sings a song to me.

*Welcome, welcome to Car-ri-a-cou, mon, welcome stranger, welcome to de West Indies, mon...yeah, oh ye-heh-heh, yeah, yeah, oh yeah, mon!*

He knocks fists with me in the traditional Grenadian greeting and wanders back to his shady spot beneath the flowering Kokioe tree, bursting red behind us. A trio of sleepy-looking donkeys nibble the grass nearby, and the little town of Hillsborough spreads out below. Just beyond it, a pair of rocky guano-drenched islands jut from the water, the Two Brothers.

A couple of hours earlier, I was immersed in the waters off the Brothers with Max, the German operator of Carriacou Silver Diving. Carried by strong currents, we slipped over swaying branches of black coral and iridescent green sea sponges, with shimmering schools of tiny bait fish mingling in massive clouds above us, before darting into the surrounding blue just as quickly as they had come together. We also came upon a pair of

Nurse Sharks nestled in a lair beneath a rocky outcropping, and spotted two large pufferfish and a sea turtle.

One of the most appealing reasons to dive off Grenada is the languorous drift diving. On most dives, I position myself a few feet over the coral, clasp my arms across my chest and let the currents carry me over gorgeous fields of healthy coral. I slipped into the sea above a dive site called Kohani, off of Indigo Bay on the southeastern side of the island, and at 45 feet below the surface, a strong current sweeps me over low coral reefs, where I sight vibrant blue sponges, Spotted Morays, pufferfish, rays and grouper. Boss Reef, off of Grand Anse, also offers a number of fantastic dive sites for drift diving, including one called Northern Exposure, where at 50 feet down I spot several large grouper and more moray eels.

Back in Hillsborough, a young fisherman plays with a 4-foot







**A crowd of Fether Duster Worms filters micro-organisms in a frenzy of feeding.**

swim beneath the pounding torrents of the 7 Sisters waterfalls. Other gorgeous falls to visit are Annandale and Mount Carmel, and from the crater lake in gorgeous Grand Étang National Park, you can make your muddy way along a trail for the three-hour hike to the falls, crashing down above Concord.

Grenada's underwater attractions are as alluring as its topside activities, and are also just as spectacular. As I zip past the glittering white sands of Grande Anse Beach with a group of divers in a well-equipped craft operated by Eco Dive, I never would have imagined that the largest wreck in the Caribbean is lying in the water, 160 feet below us. The *Bianca C* is an enormous, 600-foot-long Italian cruise liner that was sunk here in 1961, after a fire ravaged its way through the ship. These days, the *Bianca C* is Grenada's premiere diving attraction, luring divers from all over the world who want to pen the dive in their logbooks.

As we make our way to it, the current is so fierce that I feel like a signal flag flapping from a line of rigging during a squall. We head down until a large shape below reveals itself to be the *Bianca C*. Since her interior is crumbling, it is only considered safe to swim

over the length of her decks, and I soon find myself doing a somersault in *Bianca's* now overflowing swimming pool. Sea fans have replaced deck chairs around its edges and gently

flutter in the current.

We swim the length of the ship, and when I finally surface, it feels like I've been down for much longer than 20 minutes. Back on the boat, I can't help



Southern Stingray off the end of the pier. As he brings in the ray, a group of children crowd around him, screaming with delight. A large, gold-toothed lady, hawking soursap fruits nearby, cackles with delight as the sun sets beyond.

While Carriacou has only 6,000 or so people living upon it, its big sister, Grenada, feels only slightly more cosmopolitan, despite being much more populated. Most of Grenada's residents live in seaside towns filled with historic colonial stone buildings and veranda-fronted wooden structures, but the center of the island is relatively unpopulated. A working horn and good brakes are essential along the narrow, twisting roads that wind you up and round the curvy sides of the towering, green-

cloaked peaks dominating the 21-mile-long island. There the waterfalls, rivers and hot springs are tucked amid lush, dripping forests of nutmeg and gargantuan fern, and giant bamboo creak in the soft wind blowing in from the Caribbean Sea.

**You can hike to the top of the 2,757-foot Mount St. Catherine, soak in the jungle-nestled hot spring near...Bylands and swim beneath the pounding torrents of the 7 Sisters waterfalls.**

You can hike to the top of the 2,757-foot Mount St. Catherine, soak in the jungle-nestled hot spring near the mountainside village of Bylands and

but grin as I look back at the mist-shrouded peaks of the "Nutmeg Isle"—I have just experienced yet another of Grenada's delights. 🐟



# Cayman's School of Performing Arts



TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARTY SNYDERMAN



CAYMAN ISLANDS

...after 30-plus years of diving, we had to send Field Editor Marty Snyderman to the Cayman Islands to learn some good behavior.



In the distance, I saw a milky cloud billowing upward. Little white puffs near the origin of a long tail dissipated as it rose. As I swam closer, I realized that the origin of the cloud was a spawning basket sponge. The whitish cloud was a mixture of

terea plucked from their bodies, mouths and gills.

These cleaning stations are typically located at prominent places along a reef such as atop coral heads, around sponges or near anemones, especially corkscrew anemones. When you discover a station

inside the coral. The undigested coral bits are eliminated by the parrotfish and end up as sand that forms Cayman's magnificent white beaches.

### Build the Perfect Love Shack

The small damselfish known as Sergeant Majors utilize marine algae in another way. The male cultivates an algal patch in which he makes a nest. He then struts his stuff in order to encourage a female to deposit her eggs in his nest. While color and his figure-eight swimming antics play a role in wooing a mate, in reality, size determines his success. When a female nears the nest, the male "chirps"

**There is plenty of great behavior to observe in sand communities as well. It is quite common to see eagle rays and Southern Stingrays grubbing through the sand in search of food.**



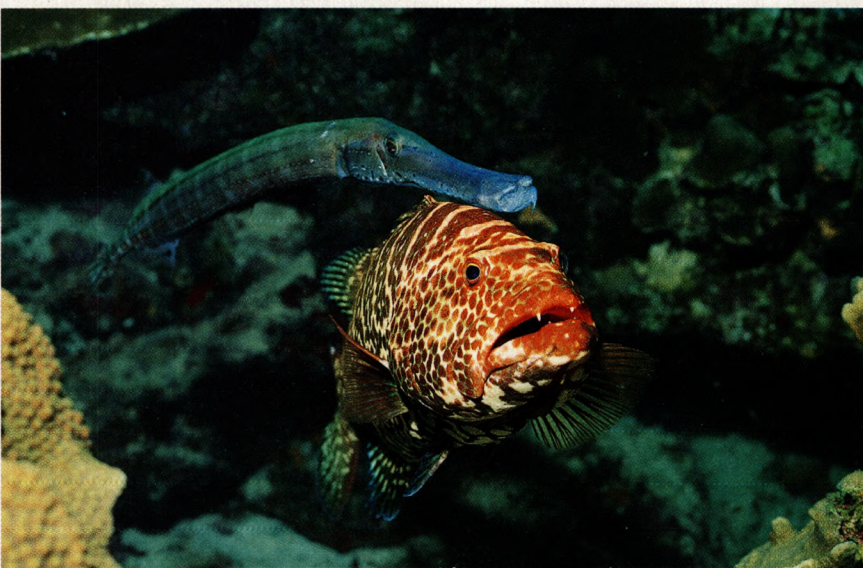
**Above: This school of baitfish means lunch is served for larger fish, such as this Tarpon. Right: "Get off my back!" A trumpetfish shadow stalks on a Tiger Grouper.**

sperm and seawater.

When I was first certified, I may have swam right past the sponge. Like most newly certified divers, I had learned that the Cayman Islands are world-renown for spectacular wall diving. However, with 30-plus years of diving under my weight-belt, I think of the Caymans as a great place to see and photograph animal behavior. And each time I pause to really look at a specific fish, I'm pleasantly surprised and entertained.

### Clean Hygiene

Cleaning can be seen during almost every daytime dive on every Caymanian reef. Common cleaners such as juvenile Spanish Hogfish and Pedersen's Shrimp typically let potential clients know they're open for business by swimming erratic patterns or waving antennae in an exaggerated fashion. Fish such as Tiger Groupers, Nassau Groupers, Spotted Morays or Green Morays line up like cars at a car wash to have unwanted ectoparasites, dead tissue, fungi and bac-



it's best to stop 8 or 10 yards away and then approach slowly. Fish may maneuver a bit to keep some distance, but usually you can get close enough to watch this fascinating process.

### Chew With Your Mouth Open

On most shallow reefs, if you stop, close your eyes and listen, you will soon hear the crunching noise of parrotfish feeding on corals. The fish don't really want to ingest the coral, they're hungry for the algae that live

by vibrating his swim bladder to attract her. More alluring, lower frequency chirps come from the larger sized males. This is a case where size truly does matter.

### Know Your Neighbor

If you encounter a school of Silversides, stop and look around. These smaller fish are sought after by many lightning fast, predatory fish such as groupers, barracuda, jacks and tarpon. Where there are Silversides, you will likely find predators on the hunt.



You can also observe the clever trumpetfish using groupers or other fish as “moving blinds” in a form of hunting known as shadow stalking. And don’t let the trumpetfish’s small mouth fool you, a trumpetfish can expand the opening of its mouth as much as 50 times its original size to gulp down unsuspecting prey.

### Enjoy a Free Ride

There is plenty of great behavior to observe in sand communities as well. It is quite common to see eagle rays and Southern Stingrays grubbing through the sand in search of food. In somewhat of a pied piper scenario, the rays are often accompanied by Bar Jacks, Yellowtail Snappers, goatfish and even

they feed on plankton above their self-made burrows. During spring and early summer, the male broods fertilized eggs in his mouth, which resemble tiny brown marbles. He’ll hold his babies until they hatch almost four weeks later—Mr. Mom if there ever was one!

### School’s Out, Lunch is Served

Cayman’s newest “behavior” encounter results from a direct interaction between diver and fish. Off Grand Cayman’s East End, Ocean Frontiers takes divers through an informative pre-dive classroom session on sharks, shark behavior, shark feeding and shark etiquette in preparation for an ultimate behavior experience. Afterward, divers



**A diver checks out a Spotted Eagle Ray foraging in the sand. Above right: A Sergeant Major hopes to woo a potential mate with the size, location, color and shape of its oh-so-impressive purple algae patch.**

triggerfish that compete for food overlooked or unwanted by the rays. Hogfish, snapper and even trunkfish can also be seen blowing jets of water into the sand in an attempt to uncover prey.

Closer inspection of patches of sand and rubble may reveal Yellowhead Jawfish, which ascend and descend as

jump on the boat and head to a shallow reef to enjoy a controlled, close encounter shark dive with some of the toothy locals—up to 10 Caribbean Reef Sharks that frequent the twice weekly feeds.

During a recent trip to the Caymans, I observed all of these incredible marine behaviors as well as a variety of others.

Years ago, I may have missed them, but experience has taught me to stop and smell the roses...and Cayman has some of the fishiest roses you’ll encounter. 🐟

*Special thanks to Paul Deegan and Squire Dodd at Dive 'N Stuff for providing diving and assistance for this article.*





In the shallows of Walker's Cay, divers can get intimate with what some consider the most dangerous shark in the world. Why, you ask, would you want to do that? For the privilege of course.

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIMON ROGERSON

**I**n an age when a revisionist, sympathetic view of sharks is gradually entering the mainstream, the Bull Shark is still playing the villain's role. Marine biologists describe the species as being "more dangerous than the Great White or Tiger Sharks," while sober guidebooks warn that it "will eat almost anything it can capture."

So why do we want to get in the water with them? Why do we want to swim up to a 12-foot shark with

the physique of a dumptruck and a rap sheet that makes Charles Manson look angelic by comparison? Why? Because there's just a chance—if we behave ourselves—that it might accept our presence and go about its business, giving us

a unique insight into the private life of a super-predator.

It seemed to me that this was a risk worth taking, so I joined a small trip run by the English shark expert, Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch, with the hope of

coming face to face with this maligned fish. Jeremy has devoted much of his life to shark conservation and has published several highly-regarded books on the subject. Tall

# The Private Life of a Sup



and aristocratic, his voice is so deep it is sometimes hard to understand what he's saying. He also has an alarmingly dark sense of humor. When I remarked that I was looking forward to doing some organized shark dives, he just looked at me and bellowed with laughter. The point I think he was making (in his own rather rude way) was that although we know a little about shark behavior, most of our responses to sharks are instinctive. For all our bluster and research, no one really knows what's going on inside a shark's primitive mind.

Bull Sharks are by no means rare, but they are seldom encountered by divers. Given their reputation, you can understand why most people would prefer to give them a wide berth. But this is an animal that is sometimes closer to us than we imagine. Uniquely among the big predatory sharks, it can tolerate fresh water, and has even been found 1,750 miles up the Mississippi river. Still, it is rarely encountered by divers, so when Jeremy heard of a place where Bull Sharks gather, we began packing our bags. Our destination was the tiny but famous island of Walker's Cay in the northern Abacos.

Just an hour's flight from Fort Lauderdale, FL, this Bahamian jewel has rightly become a legend in the world of shark diving.

The celebrated "chum-

sicle" dives run by Gary Adkison often draw more than 100 Caribbean Reef Sharks, which feed with obvious enthusiasm on the trash can-sized lump of frozen fish. These feeds (which carefully eliminate humans from any direct contribution to the food chain) tend to attract Caribbean Reef Sharks, Nurse Sharks and Blacktips, while larger predators like the Bulls and Great Hammerheads are only occasional diners.

While visiting divers have been happily chugging off to the chum-sicle site, Gary Adkison has long kept quiet about the Bull Sharks, which congregated at a quiet bay at the end of the landing strip. For years, fishermen have cleaned their catches in this bay, and the Bull Sharks took to feeding on the discarded scraps.

A Bull Shark slowly glides through the shallows in the late afternoon light.

# er-predator

T H E B A H A M A S



At any given time, there can be between eight and 16 sharks ghosting the shallows. On the day of my arrival, it was a packed house: there were 15 Bull Sharks and a very big Lemon Shark, all visible from the shore. At this point, the group of shark lovers accompanying me

commented, with customary sarcasm. The visibility in the shallows was terrible, so I slowly finned out into deeper water, trying to exude confidence. A few yards out, the visibility improved, and I was able to take stock of my surroundings. The water was about 8 feet deep,

confrontation, but on each occasion, the shark gently gave way, angling its muscular body and changing course with a flick of its tail. They did not want to bump into me. Apparently, people have tried using scuba equipment

**This was it, I was alone...facing the quarterbacks of the shark world with only a battered camera housing for protection. Then, without any warning, fan-fare or fuss, I was among them.**

found it necessary to begin a series of careful equipment checks: no mean feat when all you have to worry about are mask, fins and snorkel. We prepared a bait cage and flung it into the shallows,

and there was a rocky bottom, strewn with rubble and old pipes. About 20 yards from shore, a lush expanse of seagrass stretched into deeper water. The water was milky, but clear enough for me

to see several large sharks gliding into view.

This was it, I was alone (Derek was still fiddling with his mask by the water's edge, curse him), facing the quarterbacks of the shark world with only a battered camera housing for protection. Then, without any warning, fan-fare or fuss, I

was among them. In water that was still only a few feet deep, a colossal shark swam right under me, the peak of its dorsal fin brushing my chest. Its movements appeared relaxed and, to my sincere gratitude, it didn't seem remotely interested in me.

I have a fair amount of experience with large marine animals, but Bull Sharks have a presence that is all their own. In the first instance, they are incredibly bulky—some people mistake pregnant Caribbean Reef Sharks for Bulls, but they're barely a third of the size of an adult Bull. The largest of the sharks at Walker's Cay is a particularly rotund female who has been christened Bahama Momma (being a classy lady, she was named after a rum cocktail). She is 8 feet from nose to tail and weighs a good 800 pounds.

I found I could swim quite peacefully among the giants. Occasionally, I found myself on course for a head-on

to dive with the sharks, but it spooks them, making it harder to get close.

As I grew more confident, I tried diving down to take some face-to-face photographs of the sharks. Obliging, they approached to within a few feet, fixing me with fathomless eyes before veering away. Once, while duck-diving to photograph one of the females over the seagrass meadow, I bumped into another shark that had moved in from my blind side. It was like swimming into a wall of flesh; the shark simply flicked its tail and sped off, appalled by my uncouth behavior.

Some simple rules had to be observed to keep the Bulls in this serene state. Small pieces of dead fish were periodically thrown into the water to maintain their interest, but the introduction of injured or struggling prey would have radically altered their behavior. The sound, smell and energy emitted by a stricken fish would convert them instantly from scavengers to hunters. Color was another important stimulus—anything white attracted immediate interest. I wore a black wetsuit, hood and gloves, as well as a black mask, to cover every inch of my pasty skin. The ensemble lent me a sinister appearance, but it succeeded in keeping the sharks placid.

As the day wore on, the sharks remained relatively calm, so we decided to raise the stakes. The snorkelers retreated to the shallows, where the water was deep enough to float without stirring up the silt and lay in a line facing the open sea. Then, Gary began pitching large pieces of fish into the water, a few feet in front of us. Emboldened by the splashing and sudden abundance of food, the sharks



During the first part of the interaction, the Bull Sharks tended to linger close to the bottom.

but to tell the truth, the sharks were already coming right up to the shore. "Are we really going to do this?" asked Dan, a mild-mannered accountant who had an annoying habit of talking good sense. "And do we really need to use all that bait?" Apparently so. Jeremy produced a handful of fish parts and tossed it into the water. "Who wants to go in first?" he asked, looking directly at me. I glanced at a tree. The other so-called shark aficionados were still making "important" adjustments to their weightbelts, but I was suited and booted. A lawyer friend of mine, Derek, was also ready to go. "The sharks won't bite me," he said with a confident smile. How so? "Professional courtesy."

I slithered down the rocks to the water's edge, and splashed clumsily into the shallows. "Very elegant," Jeremy





became excited and thudded against each other as they competed for the scraps. Still, their feeding was ritualized rather than frenzied; the larger sharks set the agenda and quickly established their dominance over the others. There was absolutely no hand-feeding of the sharks, so they didn't associate the snorkelers with the bounty of free food. "They think you're simply another predator trying to feed," Jeremy said. "Just don't give the impression that you're going to reach the fish before they do."

As if to test his theory, he threw a piece of fish into the water, just in front of my face. Every muscle in my body tensed as a shark appeared from the murk and zoned in on the fish. I hoped I was doing a good impersonation of an assured predator who wasn't interested in feeding. The shark swooped up and took the morsel in its jaws with a gentle grace. Gasping into my snorkel, I turned around to see Jeremy grinning mischievously. "Did you see the shark?" he asked. Sometimes, they came even closer.

#### **Large Bull Sharks regularly approached divers to within a few feet.**

Bull Sharks are still considered by many to be the most dangerous sharks in the world. Their opportunistic diet and ability to thrive in fresh water has led to attacks on humans in rivers such as the Ganges, the Zambezi and the Amazon, where a Bull Shark was once found a staggering 2,300 miles from the sea. They are said to kill more people than Great Whites and Tigers combined, and were implicated in the spate of attacks along New Jersey in 1916, which inspired Peter Benchley to write *Jaws*. Their name is synonymous with fear and death, but at Walker's Cay, I came face to face with a shark that confounded my expectations. Yes, Bull Sharks are imposing predators. But you can't spend a week snorkeling peacefully with them and still claim they are relentless maneaters.

To swim freely and unharmed with an untamable animal in its own environ-

ment is a remarkable privilege. Sharks are the only major predators with which we can interact with such intimacy. Can you imagine going for a stroll among a pride of lions in the Serengeti or taking a dip with a saltwater crocodile off Northern Australia? You'd probably be torn to shreds, and people would say it served you right. Sharks are altogether

**Bull Sharks are still considered by many to be the most dangerous sharks in the world. ...But you can't spend a week snorkeling peacefully with them and still claim they are relentless maneaters.**

more selective about what they choose to attack, as the Bulls of Walker's Cay so clearly demonstrate. 🐟

*The author would like to thank Gary Adkison of Walker's Cay and Jeremy Stafford-Deitsch of the Shark Trust for their advice and help.*



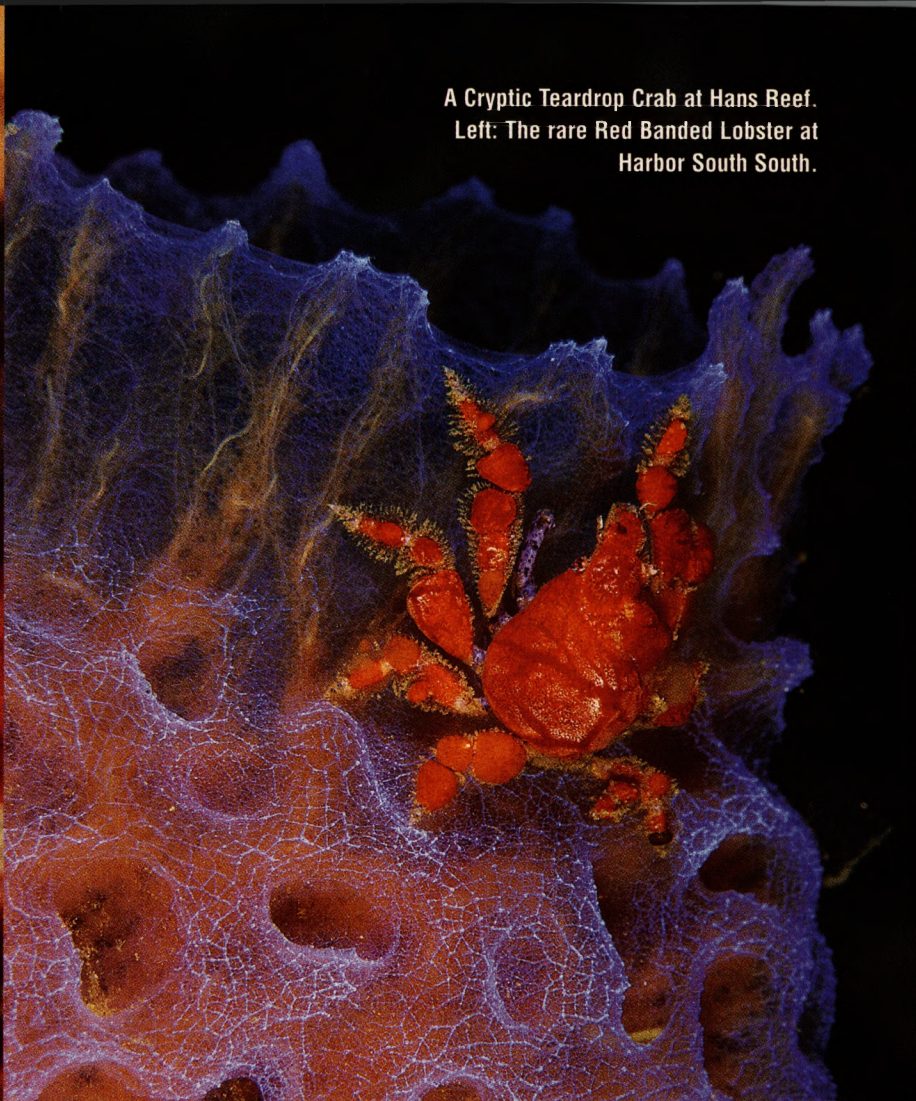


# Critter- Spotters Anonymous

A Hapless Band of Texas Photographers Cry for  
Mercy and More Film in St. Vincent's Prolific Waters

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEB FUGITT





A Cryptic Teardrop Crab at Hans Reef.  
Left: The rare Red Banded Lobster at  
Harbor South South.

**"P**lease Sarah, no more frogfish!" I begged on the final day of diving with our group of Dallas Underwater Photographic Society photographers. Sarah's expression wavered between a "she must be teasing" smile and a more serious "this gal is nuts" raised eyebrow and frown.

"We are sick to death of froggies. Can't you take us to a site where we won't find any?" Tony pleaded with a twinkle in his eye and a crosswise glance at the other divers aboard Dive Fantasea's sleek new dive boat, *Get Wet*.

"Yes, please don't show us any more of those darned froggies," the others chimed in, all aware that they would be finning in place waiting their turn to shoot any frogfish discovered on the next dive. "Unless it is pink," a voice echoed faintly from somewhere in the bow.

### Frogfish Soup

The sea was "Frogfish Soup" during our too short week of diving among the rocks and reefs of St. Vincent. While the pea-soup green visibility was some of the worst I'd seen in 17 years diving the area, the critters didn't care, and it had very little impact on our macro photography. White, green and black frogfish; yellow, orange and beige frogfish; gray, algae-textured and somewhere-in-between green and red frogfish; yawning, fishing and kickboxing frogfish were everywhere this trip.

Frogfish spend their days, and it appears nights as well, trying (very successfully) to look and behave like a sponge, and there are plenty of sponges in St. Vincent. On our side were Dive Fantasea's divemasters, Sarah Bourne and Wayne Gregg, both experienced critter spotters who were quick to distinguish a pseudo-sponge frogfish imitation from the real thing.

### Density and Diversity

St. Vincent, in the southeastern Caribbean's Windward Islands, is a superb destination for critter-loving divers and has long been in my list of top three "Best Critter Diving" spots in the world. There is something miraculous about its location, the black sand, rock formations and proximity to deep water that creates habitats and food for a huge quantity of diverse species of marine life. I was thrilled at the prospect of showing off the area to divers from my Dallas, TX, photo club. It did not disappoint!

On this trip, one of the most productive sites was Hans Reef. Life is abundant on this offshore reef—a shallow plateau of jumbled rocks and sponges surrounded by a series of deeper ledges. The density of life in and around the sponges that blanket the area is extraordinary. Every bit of the plateau is covered with life. Hans is the worm and brittle star capital of St. Vincent.



Christmas Tree Worms, feather duster worms and millions of Split Crown Worms adorn the sponges and tickle the noses of Goldentail, Chain, Spotted and Viper Moray Eels. Bristle worms are everywhere. Their nightmarish cousin, the 10-foot-long "Bristle Worm from Hell," an iridescent red eunicid polychaete worm, ventures out only at night to be seen by those quick enough to spot it before it swiftly retracts like a 10-foot tape measure back into the rocks.

**White, green and black frogfish; yellow, orange and beige frogfish; gray, algae-textured and somewhere-in-between green and red frogfish; yawning, fishing and kickboxing frogfish were everywhere this trip.**

Reef Scorpionfish, common denizens of St. Vincent's sponge-covered reefs, are easy to spot head-down on the barrel sponges at Hans. These sponges made an amazing recovery from the blasting they received in November '99 from waves spun off by Hurricane Lenny. Around every other rock, Red Banded Coral Shrimp, Pederson's Shrimp and giant-sized arrow crabs congregate en masse, often stepping on each other. Basket star, hermit crabs and file clams nestle in the dark recesses of the rocks. With the background of sponge and coral colors of yellow, green, orange, red, blue and purple, this site is a photographer's delight.

### Crustaceans

Day or night, they are everywhere! Wayne, at our request, produced a Bullseye Lobster on our very first daytime dive at Anchor Reef. This beautiful lobster, identified by its brilliant red color and the target painted in white on each side, is plentiful in St. Vincent, as are spotted rock, spiny, spanish and sculptured lobsters. During our first night dive at Orca Point, those five lobster species strolled in the moonlight around and between giant boulders. A sixth species, the Copper Lobster, ducked under a rock just beside the mooring on that same dive. Divemasters routinely find the rare and strikingly colored Red Banded Lobster in deep reefs here as well, but not at Orca Point, which is a shallow dive.

Golden Coral Shrimp often hide on the pink-colored sponge and hydroid bouquets in the sandy areas. In fact, one clump of sponge would often house four species of shrimp and three species of small crabs. Aggressive pistol shrimp stay deep within most of the corkscrew anemones until something comes near, then dart out, giant claw drawn, ready to attack with a "pop!" I found Scarlet-striped Cleaning Shrimp, spotted anemone shrimp and the Peppermint Shrimp routinely during the day.

Even in the sandy lifeless-looking areas, we could find tiny *Gnathophyllodes mineri* shrimp on the undersides of West Indian Sea Urchins and white Pea Crabs on the Red Heart Urchins.



"Ain't I purdy!" An algae-textured Longlure Frogfish.

### Night Dives

At night, decorator crabs are in their element. With the abundant sponge species available, no two crabs look the same. The largest ones, a species of spider crab which we named the "Anemone-butt" crabs, adorn themselves with Carmen Miranda-looking sponge headdresses and place gorgeous tall anemones on the rear of their carapaces. The look is something like Las Vegas showgirls gone all wrong.

At Harbor South South, I watched a sponge crab clutching a four-inch square piece of orange sponge covered with golden zoanthids jump off the wall and parasail into a black spiny sea urchin where it clung to the spines. Red and purple Cryptic Teardrop Crabs were as thick as confetti after a New Year's Eve party.

"So, please Sarah, don't show us any more frogfish! I'm serious. My right hand aches from repeatedly pressing the trigger on my camera, and I live in fear of developing carpal *photo* syndrome. Show mercy! The mere thought of running out of film yet again is too much for this photo-loving soul to bear. 🐟



# Steve's Caribbean encounters

**F**rom the deck of a 150-foot-long mother ship, Humpback Whales swimming nearby look big. From a 25-foot-long skiff that is within 20 yards of the same whales, the animals seem huge. You can smell the whales. You feel their presence. Not only do you hear them breathing, but the sounds are so loud that you can't talk over them. Your skiff rocks and rolls from the waves they create. The difference between the two vantage points is profound. On the mother ship, your heart skips a beat with excitement, but on the skiff, your heart

Nimble giant: A curious Humpback Whale hangs out with the author.

jumps into your throat.

At the Silver Bank, off the Dominican Republic, you have a chance for the "heart in your throat" kind of encounter taken one step farther. Due to special permitting, it is possible to snorkel with Humpback Whales, animals that reach proportions of 60 feet and 100,000 pounds.

A few years ago, I was at the

Silver Bank with my longtime pal Steve Drogin, and we were thinking about taking a midday break when a pair of Humpback Whales, a female and an escort, surfaced about 50 yards away. I recall telling Steve in rather flippant fashion that we might as well slip into the water and give 'em a try because we would never see a whale when we are belly up to the

bar. That same day we had already struck out more times than we cared to remember, so we didn't have high expectations. This time, fate was on our side. Almost as soon as we entered the water, the female turned toward us.

I soon found myself bobbing on the surface only three feet above the female's head. So much for my abilities as a prognosticator! The whale was so close that when I looked through the viewfinder of my wide-angle lens, all I could see was a "slab of whale." I swam to my right to try to get a better perspective, but the

**Swimming eyeball to eyeball with a creature that is 500 times my size was awe-inspiring, humbling, thrilling, educational, personal and intimidating all at the same time.**

Humpback turned as I did. So I went left, and once again, the whale turned with me. Then it hit me—this was a game, and I was the object of the whale's curiosity. I thought the game worked the other way.

Moments later, the whale shot past me and disappeared in a wall of whitewater and bubbles. As the water cleared, Steve and I just stared at each other in private disbelief.

Soon the Humpbacks returned, and we spent the next several hours swimming with them, often having the female approach to within a few feet of us. The whales' body control is amazing. Several times I was within inches of the female, but not once did she touch me.

The memory of that dive will live with me for a lifetime. Swimming eyeball to eyeball with a creature that is 500 times my size was awe-inspiring, humbling, thrilling, educational, personal and intimidating all at the same time. 🐋

# Huge

**Close Encounters on the Dominican Republic's Silver Bank**

TEXT AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARTY SNYDERMAN

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



# Travels with Nevin

**Fred "F. Scott" Garth  
dives into Dominica with  
his trusty assistant.**

**Y**ou know the grind. Same old 150-foot viz, Whale Sharks on every dive, luxury yachts, private jets and Chateau Lafitte Rothschild '63 with seven-course dinners. Major yawner, right? Who wouldn't be bored with this life? And so, as I sat on my veranda overlooking my prodigious estate, I knew I had to get some dirt under my fingernails and find a little natural excitement.

Naturally, my quest for an earthy thrill led me to the laptop, where I connected the high-speed satellite uplink and did an expansive search on the Web. Well, actually, my personal assistant, Nevin, did the dirty work. But I watched attentively over his shoulder, while attempting to spear an olive.

After an excruciating 30 minutes of waiting, I left Nevin and retired to the high-board to practice my swan dives.

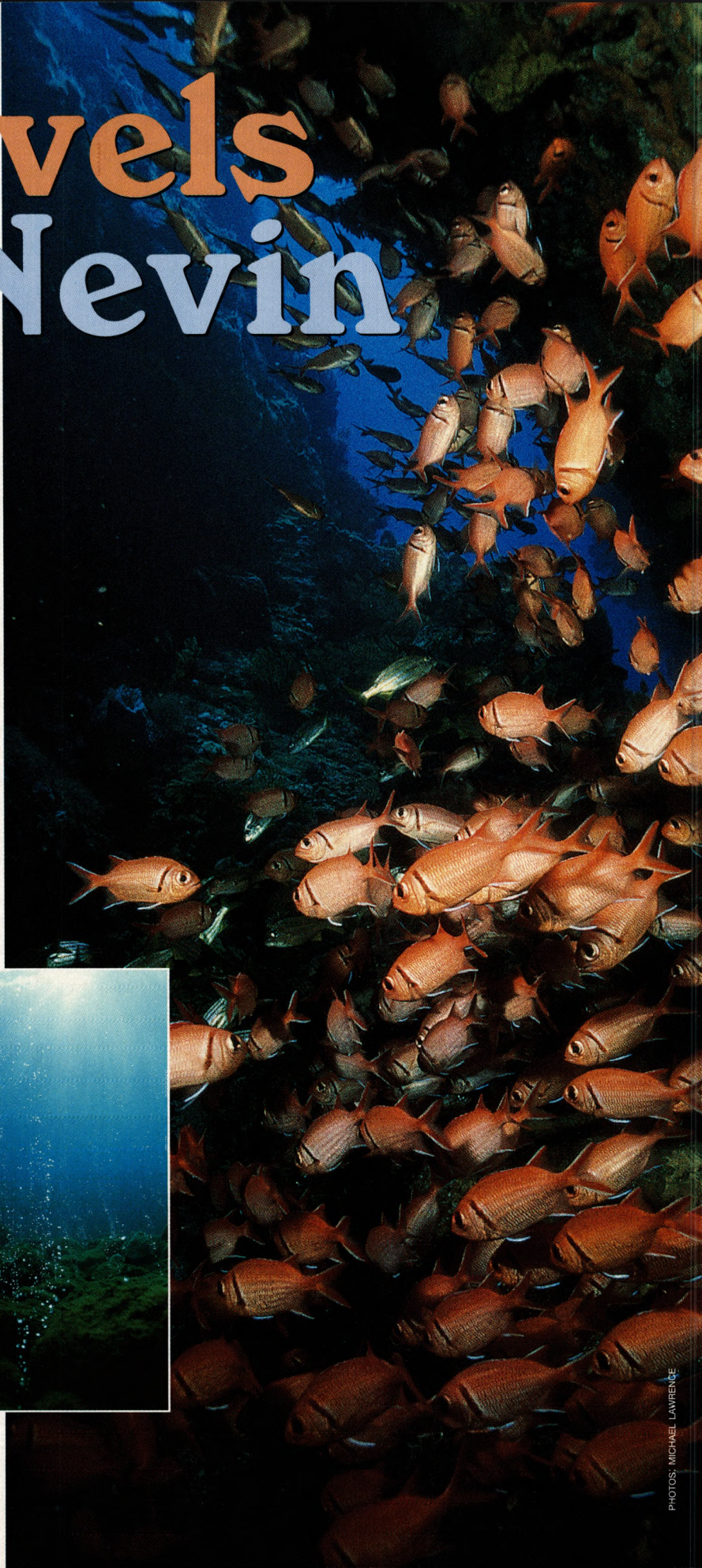
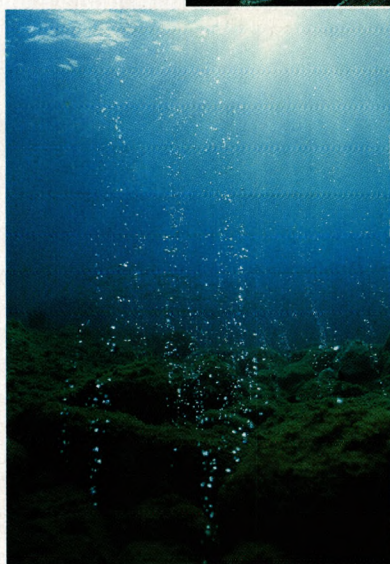
"How does champagne snorkeling sound?" Nevin called out to me across the courtyard.

I've bathed in fresh strawberry juice at Palm Springs and once coated my tender skin in vanilla yogurt. But snorkeling in champagne sounded simply exquisite, not to mention positively tingly.

"What's it all about? Tell me quickly."

"You don't actually swim in champagne," Nevin snipped at me. "The bubbles come from under hot volcanic rock. It just seems like champagne."

**A legion of Blackbar Soldierfish at Scott's Head Arch. Inset: Like a glass of the finest bubbly, champagne snorkeling.**







"That's good enough for me," I said. "Where is it and when can we go? Call the chauffeur, *post haste*."

"It's a small island in the Caribbean called the Commonwealth of Dominica," Nevin informed. "Their website calls it the Nature Island. It claims many stunning waterfalls and 365 rivers."

"Oh, one for each day of the year I gather," said I.

"If you say so, sir," Nevin yawned.

So we cleared the spa and country club schedule, loaded our Guccis and warmed up the jet.

On the flight down, Nevin poured through the documents he had printed about the island, while I struggled with which hat to wear upon our landing.

"They've got a boiling lake," Nevin said. "It's called, well, Boiling Lake."

"I suppose no snorkeling, eh Nevy?"

"Correctamundo, sir," he said. "It's hotter than Hades. It steams, bubbles and boils, and is the second largest of its kind in the world."

"Stunning," I hummed.

"Actually, in geologic terms, it's a solfatara, as in the volcano near Naples and derived from the Latin noun *sulfer*."

"Nevin, have you been mainlining ginkgo biloba smart pills again?" I asked. "Honestly, how will we ever find a hat to contain your large brain?"

Nevin ignored my rambling and went on to tell me about Dominica's myriad mountains reaching beyond 3,000 feet of altitude, the highest being Morne Diablotin at 4,747 feet high!

"Nevin, tell me you brought my hiking boots."

"Of course," he groaned. Then I saw a rise in his left eyebrow and the slightest hint of emotion cross his face. Something grandiose had to be afoot.

"Now, this is interesting," Nevin blurted.

"What is it?" I demanded. "Do they have a fountain of youth as well?"

"Indeed, they must."

"Come again?"

"Well, it seems the world's oldest human person lives on Dominica. She's 126 years old!"

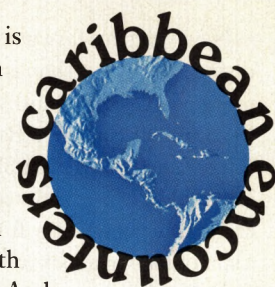
"Balderdash," I spat. "You're joshing me."

"It's true. Her name is Elizabeth 'Pampo' Israel, born January 27, 1875 on Dominica. And there are many more.

This island is Centenarian central. There is Evalina Charles and Louisa Joseph, both born in 1889 and both 112 years old. And Rose Peter, 118 years old, born in 1883."

"Sign me up!" I chirped. "Nevin, we must find these people and beg the secret of their longevity."

"Checkmate, sir."

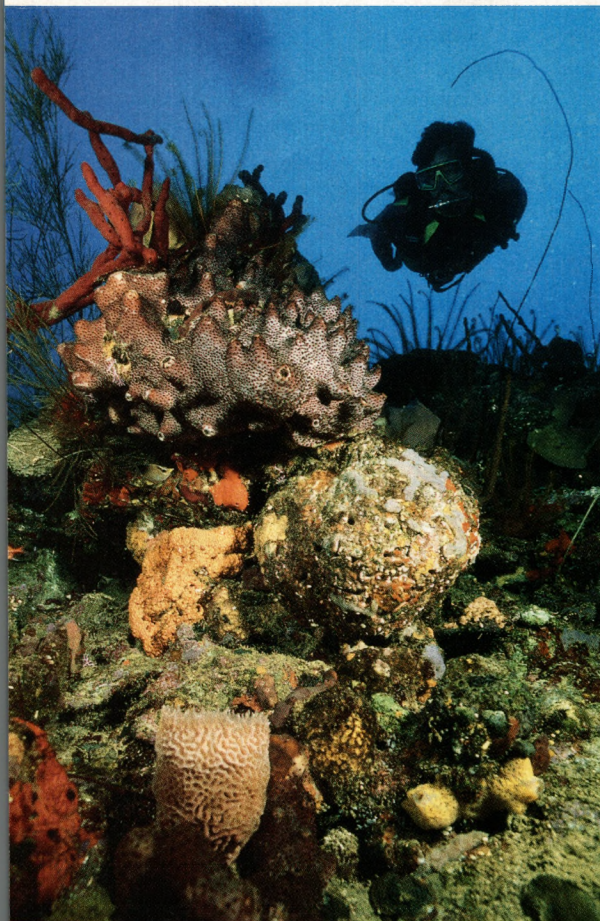


**The World Creole Music Festival.**

We landed amidst raging festivities, the World Creole Music Festival to be exact, held every October. Fortunately, Nevin had neatly packed my Rastafarian T-shirt and dreadlocks wig. I, of course, fit right in. After a spirited jiggle down the parade route, we split the festival for the bubbly snorkel. And what a wonderful plunge it was. Far better than any yogurt salve. Champagne, as the dive site is aptly called, slopes to 60 feet with nice encrusting corals and sponge growth. There's also wreckage of a 17th century ship with a couple of visible cannons. I frolicked in shallows where the warm bubbles tickled up a serious urge to submerge. Next stop, Soufriere Bay.



Nevin and our dive guide (in Dominica, diving with a dive shop is required) led us to the extreme southwestern tip of Dominica at Soufriere Bay, where there's underwater drama even Shakespeare himself couldn't have scripted. A submerged crater extends westerly from the bay along a spit of land to a rock called Scott's Head. Calm conditions, sensational dropoffs and climactic pinnacles have shaped this area



**A fruit-striped reef at Soufriere Crater.**  
**Above right: The enchanting Emerald Pool.**

into the island's most popular diving. Dive sites like Scott's Head Wall, Drop Off and Pinnacle (one of the island's most famous dives) are fraught with crevices and tunnels, and blanketed in healthy corals and sponges. Farther west, Crater's Edge is just that, a steep sloping crater with stunning pinnacles. Along the bay's northwest shoreline is more underwater theater. L'Abym wall drops from 30 feet straight down past 1,000 feet. Just to the north is Dangleben's, an island favorite that, like L'Abym, drops off into the blue abyss.

Nevin and I were overwhelmed by the diving and it took us several days to scour these "must-see" sites. But the

rewards were plentiful. The bright colors reminded me of my Peter Max period back in the '60s. Another popular diving area we visited is midway up the west coast at sites like Whale Shark, Nose Reef, Rodney's Rock and Rina's Hole. For the most part, these were kinder, gentler dives than the steep dropoffs and sheer pinnacles around Scott's Head. But all the same, they were fabulously rich in sealife and bathed in 80-foot viz.

After a few days, I realized that the intrigue about Dominica is that very few divers visit this island, leaving the reefs relatively untouched. And the waters yield sightings of the strange and unique. (Of course, Nevin and I are both into that.) For instance, we stumbled upon frogfish and seahorses on most every dive. Even Nevin shivered when he spotted a bright yellow frogfish at L'Abym Wall.

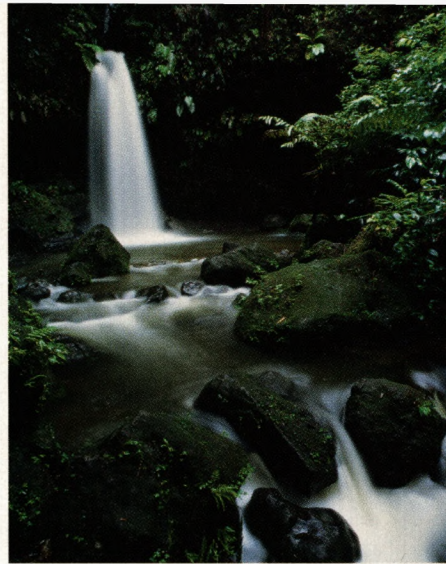
Tunnels, swim-thrus and

**...we saw dolphins on the way to several dives. Then Nevin told me about the whales, and I almost wet my pants. Numerous whale species pass Dominica, especially Sperm Whales.**

caves are everywhere, lobsters are plentiful, Harlequin Bass, Longsnout Butterflyfish, soldierfish and Spotted Drums are unusually prolific. Barrel sponges, tube sponges, black coral and multi-colored encrusting corals add to the healthy marine population. Dominica, it is safe to say, has a robust marine environment and visibility nearly 100 feet most of the time, sometimes better.

I was happy to find that spearfishing is not allowed, nor could we take any marine organism of any kind. Although, Nevin smuggled a sea urchin barb home that was hopelessly imbedded in his left buttock.

Hard rock substrate prevented growth of tall stands of coral, but Nevin reminded me that Dominica is volcanic like Hawaii, with corals that encrust large patches of rock rather than growing high. Also, the numbers of large fish were scarce, although we saw dolphins on the way to several dives. Then Nevin told me about the whales, and I almost wet my



pants. Numerous whale species pass Dominica, especially toothy Sperm Whales, mostly from November until March. I was disappointed to find that swimming with them is prohibited, but a whale watching charter (all the dive operations run them) proved fruitful. We were so close to one pod, they blew a spout of fishy whale mist all over poor Nevin's new safari hat. The smell never came out.

After a few days, Nevin and I had fallen into lockstep with the Dominican routine. Spectacular diving in the mornings and steep nature hikes in the afternoons. We toured the twin falls at Trafalgar Falls just 15 minutes from the road, but never made it to Boiling Lake (I'd have died on that five-hour, one-way hike). Two of our favorites spots were Emerald Pool (the name doesn't lie) and Middleham Falls. I'd gotten back to the taste of the earth on the Nature Island and discovered resplendent diving along the way. Our time was spent, but I knew we'd plant our feet upon Dominica's rich soil again in the future.

"You know, Nevin," I said the day we left, "we never even searched for Pampo and our merry band of Centenarians."

"True, sir."

"But, I think I understand why they live so long."

"Why so?"

"They need at least a hundred years to absorb everything this island offers the senses."

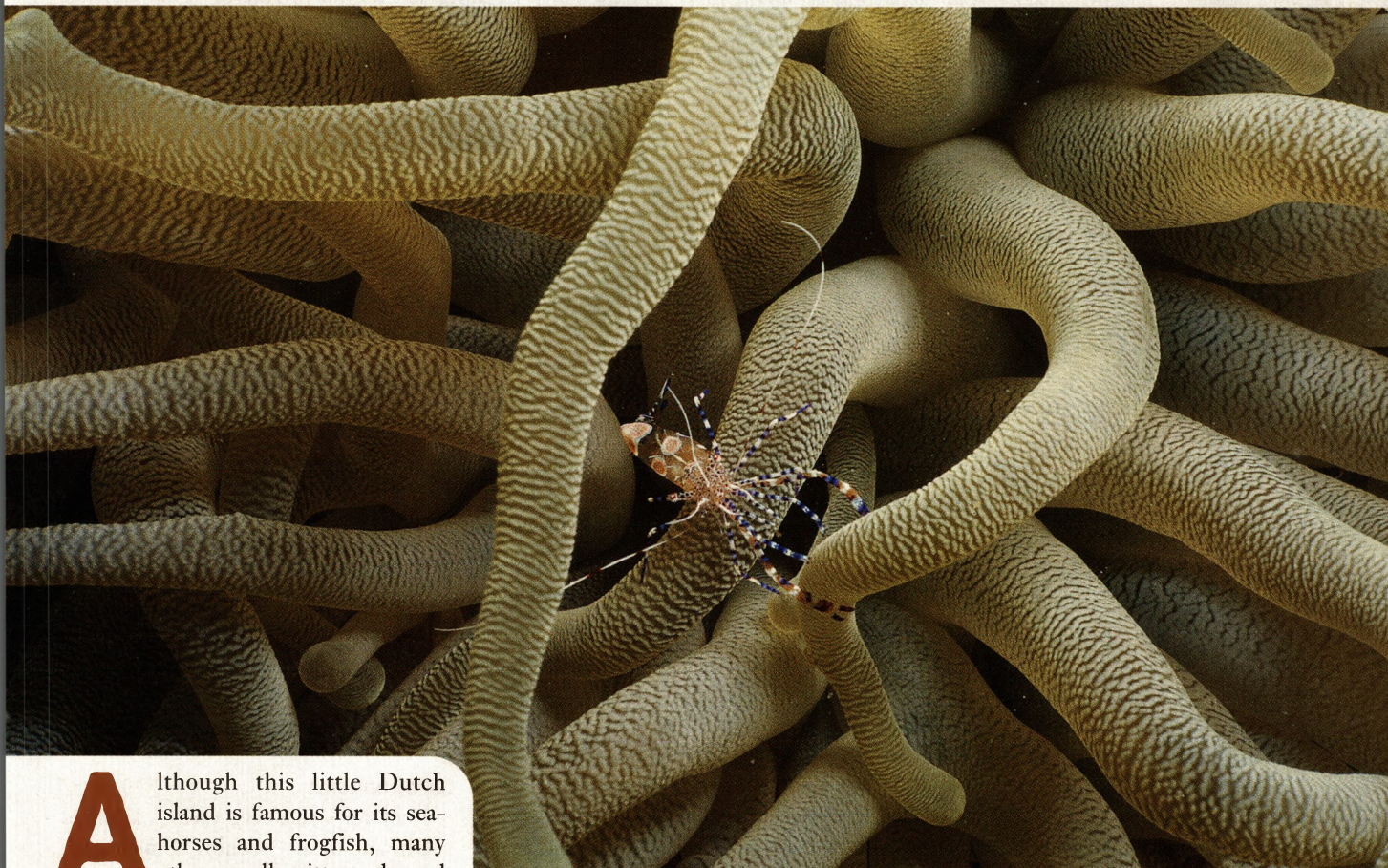
"Well said, sir," Nevin agreed. 🐡



Smaller critters were the focus of my first few years as an underwater photographer, and they're still my favorite subjects—which is why I fell in love with Bonaire on my first dive.

# Kingdom of the Small

BY BONNIE J. CARDONE



**A**lthough this little Dutch island is famous for its sea-horses and frogfish, many other small critters abound here. I don't know of any other place in the Caribbean where they are so abundant and can be found so easily.

While you may be one of those people who, from the very beginning, has a knack for finding small things, most

**A cleaner shrimp tucked away in a giant anemone. Lower left: Dwarf Frogfish.**

divers have to develop an eye for it. It helps to know where to look. If you don't already have it, buy the Paul Humann and Ned DeLoach book *Reef Creature Identification* and study it.

You could even be the one who discovers a fish or creature that's never been seen in Bonaire before. In August, a scientist doing a fish survey found a tiny blenny that no one knew lived in the island's waters. It may even be undescribed in scientific literature.

While looking for small creatures, you may find something totally unexpected: Locked in my memory (and captured on film) is one very special night dive on

Calabas Reef. It was there I came across an octopus sitting in a rocky depression with one arm wrapped around an open Polar beer can. Thinking about it still makes me smile.

Many of the creatures mentioned here are easy to find if you know where to look, but I still rely on my favorite dive guide to show me where the sea-horses and the frogfish reside. They are well-camouflaged and quite hard to see.

The trick to eyeballing these minors is to know where to look and for what.

## Giant Anemones

Nearly every one is home to one or



PHOTOS (TOP TO BOTTOM): BONNIE J. CARDONE; PHYLLIS BLACKBURN



A seahorse curls up at Munk's Haven.



octopus and file shells. Nearly all Bonaire sites have rocky areas beginning at 40 to 50 feet.

### Hard Corals

Look for Christmas Tree and Feather Duster Worms along with holes that harbor tiny Secretary Blennies. Hard corals are especially common on (but not limited to) sites on the north side of Klein Bonaire and the north side of the main island (Old Blue, Country Garden, Rappel and Karpata, for instance).

### Sponges

These are the dwelling places of frogfish. These little fish, four inches max, off Bonaire, are able to change their body color to match that of the sponge upon which they perch. The fish's lumpy body and camouflage coloration make it very hard to see. Sponges grow on rocky areas of reefs and come in many different colors and shapes. Any of them could harbor a frogfish, but, as a general rule of thumb, look below 40 feet (although I found my first one in less than 12 inches of water on a Town Pier piling). There was a frogfish in yellow tube sponges off Pink Beach one year, and two lived on Orange Elephant Ear Sponges at Something Special last year.

### Sandy Bottoms

Look for snake eels, various kinds of shells and heart urchins. Since most sites off Klein Bonaire and the main island are sandy from the shoreline to

more cleaner shrimp—sometimes of various species—and perhaps an arrowcrab. These anemones are found growing on rocks on shallow sandy bottoms. Sites on the south side of Klein Bonaire, such as Bonaventure, Rock Pile, Joanne's Sunchi, Capt. Don's Reef and South Bay, will yield lots of them. You'll also find anemones in the shallow areas of nearly every site off the main island, including Town Pier, which has an extraordinary abundance of all kinds of marine life, big and small.

### Soft Corals

These animals host Flamingo Tongue Shells (the gastropods eat their polyps) as well as tiny fish that sit on and hide among their branches. Basket seastars curl up in a ball in them during the day, extending their multiple arms to feed at

night. Soft corals grow in shallow water on many Bonaire dive sites. They can range from the familiar purple sea fans (excellent habitats for Flamingo Tongue Shells) to sea whips and sea plumes. Seahorses are often found with their tails wrapped around a soft coral branch, though they also like rope sponges and even staghorn coral. I've seen seahorses on Tory's Reef, Carl's Hill, the Town Pier, Mi Dushi and Karpata. They seem to like the shallows.

### Rocky Crevices

These are the dens of a variety of creatures, including arrowcrabs, Banded Coral Shrimp, Spotted, Green, Goldentail and Chain Morays, not to mention spiny lobster, slipper lobster,

### DEVELOPING THE EYE

If you set a relaxed pace, you'll see more: The small trumpetfish that school in a gorgonian, looking very much like one of the branches, or an eel enlisting a cleaner shrimp's service by making eye contact and opening its mouth.

40 feet, there's many chances to come across these animals.

On your next trip to Bonaire, use this article as a guide, slow down and discover the thrill of ferreting out the creatures of the small kingdom. Happy hunting! 🐟

*Special thanks to Bruce Bowker's Carib Inn.*

PHOTO: BONNIE J. CARDONE



## The Bahamas

**GETTING THERE:** Fairly inexpensive flights regularly depart from Florida and the east coast of the United States. A \$15 departure tax is applied when leaving the Bahamas. American Eagle (800) 433-7300 [www.im.aa.com](http://www.im.aa.com) • Bahamasair (800) 222-4262 [www.bahamasair.com](http://www.bahamasair.com) • Continental Connection (800) 231-0856 [www.go-abacos.com/gulfstream](http://www.go-abacos.com/gulfstream) • Discovery Cruise Line has round trips to and from Freeport (800) 937-4477 [www.discoverycruise.casinocity.com](http://www.discoverycruise.casinocity.com) **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** For Bull Sharks, the best time to go is between December and March. General diving is excellent year-round. **Topside Climate:** 72°F in the winter; mid 80s°F in the summer. **Water Temperature:** Averages 79°F. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 U.S. = 0.975 BSD. **Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time. **LIVE-ABOARDS & DIVE OPERATORS:** Walker's Cay (800) 925-5377 [www.walkerscay.com](http://www.walkerscay.com) **RESOURCES:** Bahamas Diving Association [www.bahamasdiving.com](http://www.bahamasdiving.com) • The Bahamas Tourism Centre (213) 385-0033 [www.caribtourism.com/go/bahamas](http://www.caribtourism.com/go/bahamas) • Lonely Planet Guide to the Bahamas [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)

## Bonaire

**GETTING THERE:** Bonaire is less than three hours from Miami. American Airlines has flights from New York to Aruba. From there, ALM runs connecting flights to Bonaire. ALM Airways (800) 327-7230 [www.airalm.com](http://www.airalm.com) • American Airlines (800) 433-7300 [www.aa.com](http://www.aa.com) **FACTS & TIPS:** Most diving is shore-based, and sites are marked with yellow-painted rocks at the side of the road. All divers must pay a \$10 marine park fee to dive, and a \$10 exit fee at the airport. **Best Time To Visit:** Year-round. **Topside Climate:** Dry, 90+°F during the day; 80°F at night. **Water Temperature:** Average 80°F in summer; mid 70s°F in winter. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 US = 2 Florin. **Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time. **RESORTS & DIVE OPERATORS:** Belmar Resort (800) 992-2015 [www.belmar-bonaire.com](http://www.belmar-bonaire.com) • Black Durgon Inn & Scuba Center (011) 599-717-5736 [www.blackdurgon.com](http://www.blackdurgon.com) • Bon Bini Divers (011) 599-717-5425 [www.bonbinidivers.com](http://www.bonbinidivers.com) • Bruce Bowker's Carib Inn (011) 599-717-8819 [www.caribinn.com](http://www.caribinn.com) • Buddy Dive Resort (011) 599-717-5080 [www.buddydive.com](http://www.buddydive.com) • Captain Don's Habitat (800) 327-6709 [www.habitatdiversorts.com](http://www.habitatdiversorts.com) • Dee Scar's Touch the Sea (011) 599-717-8529 [www.touchthesea.com](http://www.touchthesea.com) • Dive Inn Bonaire (011) 599-717-8761 [www.diveinn-bonaire.com](http://www.diveinn-bonaire.com) • Divi Flamingo Beach Hotel (800) 367-3484 [www.diviresorts.com](http://www.diviresorts.com) • Great Adventures (800) 868-7477 [www.harbourvillage.com](http://www.harbourvillage.com) • Lagoon Hill Bungalows (800) 992-2015 [www.lagoonhill.com](http://www.lagoonhill.com) • Plaza Resort Bonaire (800) 766-6016 [www.plazaresortbonaire.com](http://www.plazaresortbonaire.com) • Port Bonaire (800) 766-6016 [www.plazavillas.com](http://www.plazavillas.com) • Sand Dollar Condominium Resort (800) 288-4773 [www.sandollarbonaire.com](http://www.sandollarbonaire.com) or [www.discoverbonaire.com](http://www.discoverbonaire.com) • Toucan Diving (800) 766-6016 [www.toucandiving.com](http://www.toucandiving.com) • Yacht Club Apartments (011) 599-717-7424 e-mail: [yachtclubapartments@bonairenet.com](mailto:yachtclubapartments@bonairenet.com) **TOUR OPERATORS:** Caradonna Caribbean Tours (800) 328-2288 • Caribbean Adventures (800) 433-DIVE • Great Southern Island Adventures (800) 748-8733 [www.bonairepros.com](http://www.bonairepros.com) • Island Express (800) 439-0300 • Maduro Dive Fanta-Seas (800) 327-6709 **RESOURCES:** Bonaire Tourism Corporation (800) BONAIRE [www.infobonaire.com](http://www.infobonaire.com) • AquaQuest Books [www.aquaquest.com](http://www.aquaquest.com) • Lonely Planet Guide to Bonaire [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)

## Cayman Islands

**GETTING THERE:** Cayman Airways flies daily from Miami and Houston to Grand Cayman. Island Air offers numerous daily flights from Grand Cayman to her sister islands of Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Cayman Airways (800) 422-9626 [www.caymanairways.com](http://www.caymanairways.com) • Island Air (345) 949-5252 [www.islandaircayman.com](http://www.islandaircayman.com) **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** Year-round. Peak season is Winter. **Topside Climate:** May to August: 80°F average; September to April: mid 70s°F. **Water Temperature:** 78 to 82°F. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.25 US = 1 CI Dollar. **U.S. Dollar accepted. Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time minus one hour. **RESOURCES:** Cayman Islands Department of Tourism (800) 346-3313 [www.caymanislands.ky](http://www.caymanislands.ky) • Cayman Islands Tourism Association (Grand Cayman) (345) 949-8522 e-mail: [CTA@candw.ky](mailto:CTA@candw.ky) • Sister Island Tourism Association (Cayman Brac & Little Cayman) [www.sisterislands.com](http://www.sisterislands.com) • Lonely Planet Guide to Cayman Islands [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)

## Dominica

**GETTING THERE:** There are no direct flights into Dominica from international carriers. Many U.S. carriers fly into nearby islands, and from there, local carriers fly between the islands. American Airlines (800) 433-7300 [www.aa.com](http://www.aa.com) **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** November through April. **Topside Climate:** Tropical 80°F year-round. **Water Temperature:** Averages low 80s°F. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 U.S. = 2.69 Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD). **Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time plus one hour. **RESORTS & DIVE OPERATORS:** Anchorage Hotel & Dive Center (800) 934-DIVE e-mail: [anchorage@tod.dm](mailto:anchorage@tod.dm) • Anse-A-Liane Lodge & Dive Center (888) 868-8827 [www.ansealinedive.com](http://www.ansealinedive.com) • Castaways Beach Hotel/Dive Center (888) CASTAWAYS [www.divecastaways.dm](http://www.divecastaways.dm) • Castle Comfort Lodge (888) 414-7626 [www.dive dominica.com](http://www.dive dominica.com) • Dive Dominica, Ltd. (888) 414-7626 [www.divedominica.com](http://www.divedominica.com) • East Carib Dive (767) 449-6575 [www.eastcarib.dm](http://www.eastcarib.dm) • Fort Young Hotel (800) 544-7631 e-mail: [fortyoung@tod.dm](mailto:fortyoung@tod.dm) **RESOURCES:** Dominica Tourist Office (888) 645-5637 [www.dominica.dm](http://www.dominica.dm) • Lonely Planet Guide to Dominica [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)



## Dominican Republic

**GETTING THERE:** The Dominican Republic occupies about two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola; Haiti takes up the other third. It is approximately a two-hour flight from Miami. **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** The period of January thru March is the best time to see Humpbacks. February and March give the best chance for in-water encounters, while January is best for surface displays and breaching of big males. **Topside Climate:** Average 80°F in winter and 85°F in summer. **Water Temperature:** Average 75°F in winter; 85°F in summer. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 US = 16 pesos. **Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time plus one hour. **LIVE-ABOARDS:** Peter Hughes Diving, Inc./Wind Dancer (800) 9 DANCER [www.peterhughes.com](http://www.peterhughes.com) • Turks & Caicos Aggressor (888) 348-2628 [www.aggressor.com](http://www.aggressor.com) • Bottom Time II (800) 234-8464 [www.bottomtimeadventures.com](http://www.bottomtimeadventures.com) **RESOURCES:** Dominican Republic Tourist Board (888) 374-6361 [www.dominicana.com.do](http://www.dominicana.com.do) • Lonely Planet Guide to Dominican Republic [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Moon Handbooks: Dominican Republic [www.moon.com](http://www.moon.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)

## Grenada

**GETTING THERE:** There are frequent flights from the U.S. via Puerto Rico and occasional direct flights from Miami and New York. **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** Year-round. Carnival, the island's biggest festival, falls on the second weekend in August. **Topside Climate:** Grenada is balmy and rainy year-round. **Water Temperature:** Average 78 to 80°F. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 US = 2.70 Eastern Caribbean Dollars (XCD). **Time Difference:** EST plus eight hours. **LIVE-ABOARDS & DIVE OPERATORS:** 1st Spice Divers (473) 444-1126 [www.spicedivers.com](http://www.spicedivers.com) • Carriacou Silver Diving (473) 443-7882 [www.scuba max.com](http://www.scuba max.com) • Dive Grenada (473) 444-1092 [www.divegrenada.com](http://www.divegrenada.com) • Eco Dive (473) 444-7777 [www.scubadivegrenada.com](http://www.scubadivegrenada.com) • Sanvics Scuba & Watersports (473) 444-4753 [www.diveguideint.com/p0824.htm](http://www.diveguideint.com/p0824.htm) • Wandering Gecko Ltd [www.thewanderinggecko.com](http://www.thewanderinggecko.com) **RESORTS:** Ade's Dream Guest House (473) 443-7317 [www.grenadines.net/carriacou/ade.htm](http://www.grenadines.net/carriacou/ade.htm) • True Blue Bay Resort (473) 443-TRUE [www.truebluebay.com](http://www.truebluebay.com) • Laluna (473) 439-0001 [www.laluna.com](http://www.laluna.com) • La Sagesse Nature Centre (473) 444-6458 [www.lasagesse.com](http://www.lasagesse.com) **RESOURCES:** Grenada Board of Tourism (800) 927-9554 [www.carib surf.com](http://www.carib surf.com) • Lonely Planet Guide to Grenada [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)

## St. Vincent & the Grenadines

**GETTING THERE:** There are no international flights into St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Travelers must fly to a neighboring island, then take a prop plane connecting flight from there. There is a \$20 departure tax from St. Vincent. **FACTS & TIPS: Best Time To Visit:** Year-round. **Topside Climate:** January to May is the dry season. July is the wettest month and April is the driest month. Average of 78°F year-round. **Water Temperature:** Averages 80°F. **Exchange Rate:** \$1.00 US = 2.70 XCD. **Time Difference:** Eastern Standard Time. **LIVE-ABOARDS & DIVE OPERATORS:** City Seahorse, Inc. (underwater photo tour) (214) 691-1730 [www.dive-st-vincent-scuba-diving.com](http://www.dive-st-vincent-scuba-diving.com) • Dive Fantasea (784) 457-5560 [www.divefantasea.com](http://www.divefantasea.com) • Dive St.Vincent (784) 457-4928 [www.DiveStVincent.com](http://www.DiveStVincent.com) **RESORTS:** Lagoon Marina & Hotel (784) 458-4308 [www.lagoonmarina.com](http://www.lagoonmarina.com) • Sunset Shores Hotel (784) 458-4411 [sun shore@caribsurf.com](mailto:sun shore@caribsurf.com) • Young Island Resort (784) 458-4826 e-mail: [y-island@caribsurf.com](mailto:y-island@caribsurf.com) **RESOURCES:** St.Vincent and the Grenadines Diving [www.scubasvg.com](http://www.scubasvg.com) • St.Vincent and the Grenadines Department of Tourism [www.svgtourism.com](http://www.svgtourism.com) • Lonely Planet Guide to St. Vincent and the Grenadines [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) • Skin Diver Online [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com)



# Skin Diver caribbean dive guide

## Central Caribbean

Cayman Islands Department of Tourism



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websites: [www.cobaltcoast.com](http://www.cobaltcoast.com) or [www.divetech.com](http://www.divetech.com)

Little Cayman Beach Resort



Little Cayman's premier resort complimented by Reef Divers' award-winning dive operation. Dive legendary Bloody Bay Wall, enjoy friendly staff and wonderful meals at the Caribbean's #1 rated, full-service dive resort, Little Cayman Beach Resort. Call 1-800-327-3835 or 813-323-8727.  
email: [bestdiving@reefseas.com](mailto:bestdiving@reefseas.com)  
website: [www.littlecayman.com](http://www.littlecayman.com)

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Web: [www.sunsethouse.com/sd.htm](http://www.sunsethouse.com/sd.htm)

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website: [www.oceandivercuba.com](http://www.oceandivercuba.com)





# Western Caribbean

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email: [fantasyislandresort@bonnebeach.com](mailto:fantasyislandresort@bonnebeach.com)

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Families, divers, non-divers love our 45-acre paradise in the Marine Reserve. Small, informal, guest-focused resort operates its own restaurant and dive operation. Package includes A/C rooms, 3 boat dives daily, 1 night dive, 3 meals daily, airport transfers, Historic Village, Natural Aquarium Buoyed Snorkel Trail, and more. Call 1-800-4ROATAN.  
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Dive the world's 2nd largest barrier reef on our modern custom dive fleet under the supervision of our PADI Gold Palm 5-Star dive pros. Enjoy fiery Caribbean sunsets from the privacy of your sundeck. Ride horses on secluded beaches, or play volleyball during our tropical beach picnic. Paddle the calm warm waters surrounding our private island paradise in a kayak or canoe. Our all-incl. dive and snorkel pkgs. offer many amenities other resorts charge extra for. 800-227-3483. website: [www.anthonyskey.com](http://www.anthonyskey.com)

## Laguna Beach Resort-Bay Islands



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## Avalon Reef Club – Belize



Located within 300 yards of the famous dive and snorkel haven known as "Mexico Rocks," this fabulous Belize beach resort highlights world-class reef scuba diving and fishing activities. Avalon Reef Club is the essence of sun, surf, sport, and spacious white sand. Toll free 1-800-770-6844.

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website: [www.divebelize.com](http://www.divebelize.com)

## Ramon's Village-Belize



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website: [www.ramons.com](http://www.ramons.com)

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Website: [www.aquadives.com](http://www.aquadives.com)

## Manta Dive-Belize



Dive and snorkel at Manta Resort on Glover's Atoll, designated a UN World Heritage Site for its unspoiled reef system. Full and 1/2 week packages include SCUBA diving, snorkeling and kayaking from our palm covered Island. 12 air-conditioned cabanas line the lagoon. Call today. 800 326 1724

e-mail: [info@mantaresort.com](mailto:info@mantaresort.com)  
website: [www.mantaresort.com](http://www.mantaresort.com)

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Diversity and flexibility describe TURNEFFE FLATS diving. With over 80 dive sites logged on the Turneffe Atoll itself, you will not dive the same dive site more than once unless you want to! Our experienced dive staff believes in providing divers as much flexibility as possible. Inexperienced divers will receive the individualized attention they may require, and more experienced divers have the flexibility they desire.

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# Skin Diver caribbean dive guide

## Eastern Caribbean Windward

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## Dive Guide Specialists

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## Northern Caribbean

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But now that the holidays are here, other things come to mind: that leaky mask you've been wearing for two years too long or the wetsuit that didn't keep you as warm as you wanted it to. If you're like most people who always want more, you just HAVE TO HAVE that dive light you saw your buddy using on your last night dive.

The holidays are a perfect time to put together a wish list for those who don't know what to get the guy who has everything. Once you've given your wish list to a loved one (or fellow diver), they may need a little guidance on where to start. Tell them to start at Skin Diver Online's Gear Guide at [www.skin-diver.com](http://www.skin-diver.com).



The guide is categorized into easy-to-find sections: Masks & Snorkels, Fins, Primary Gear, Suits, Lights, Accessories and Photo Gear. You can view various colors and styles from top manufacturers. Website addresses on each product make your shopping even easier by enabling you to check out the manufacturers' other products.

You never know, you may find something for yourself. Or maybe you'll discover a destination for next year's dive trip through our Travel section, Custom Destination Guides or Live on Locations. Just another thing to add to your wish list this holiday season. 🐠





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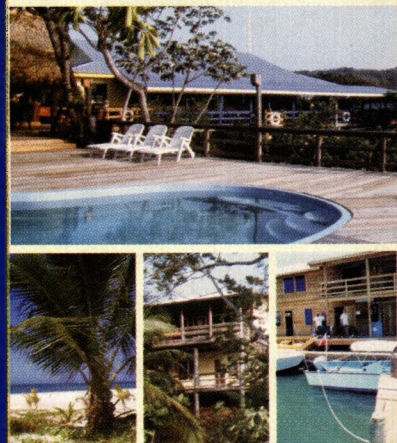
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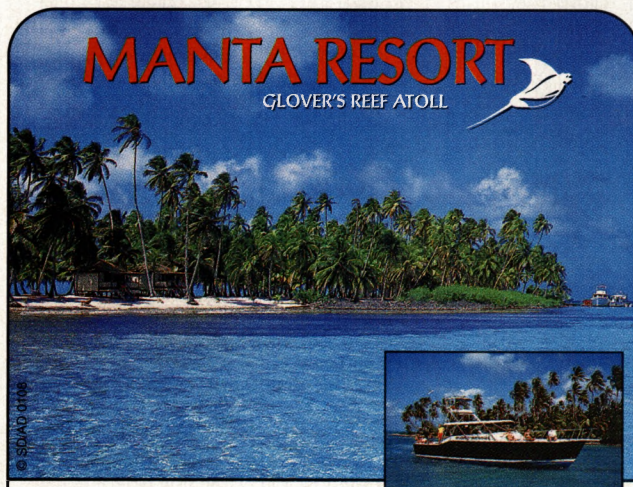




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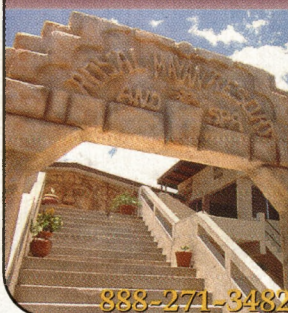
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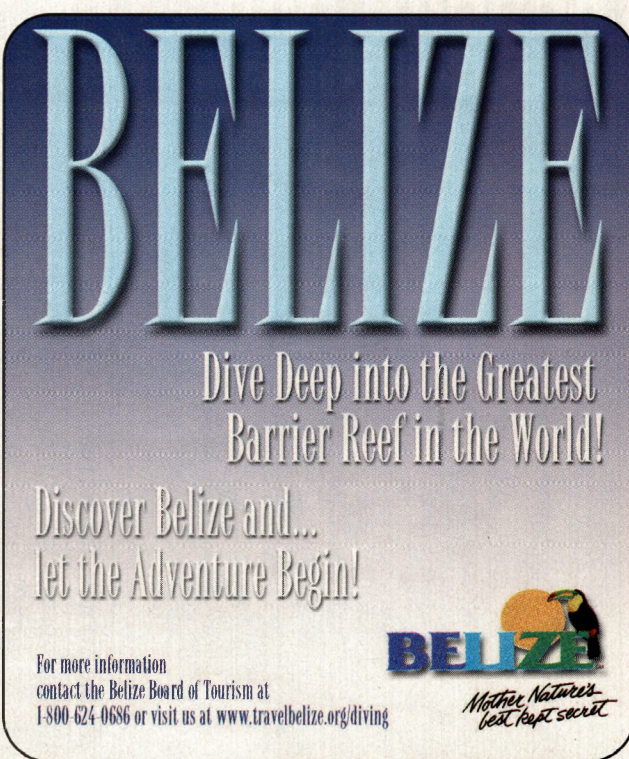
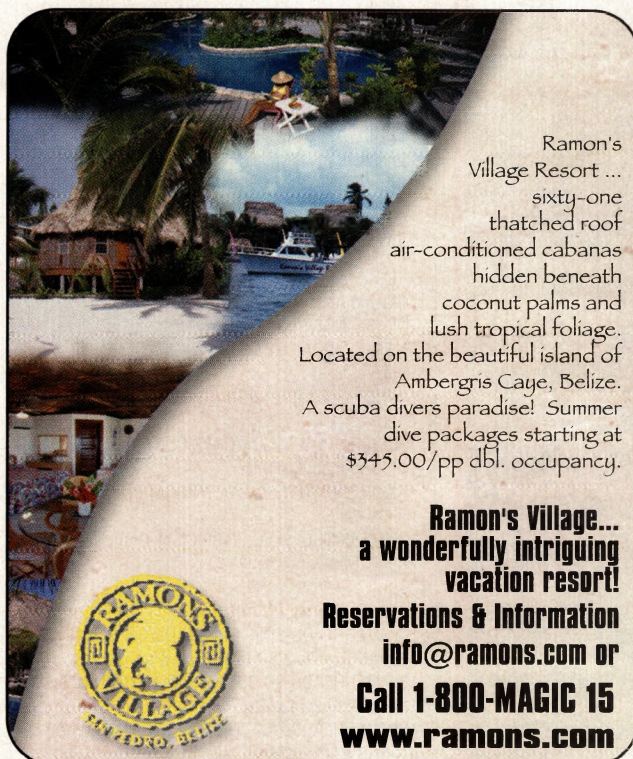


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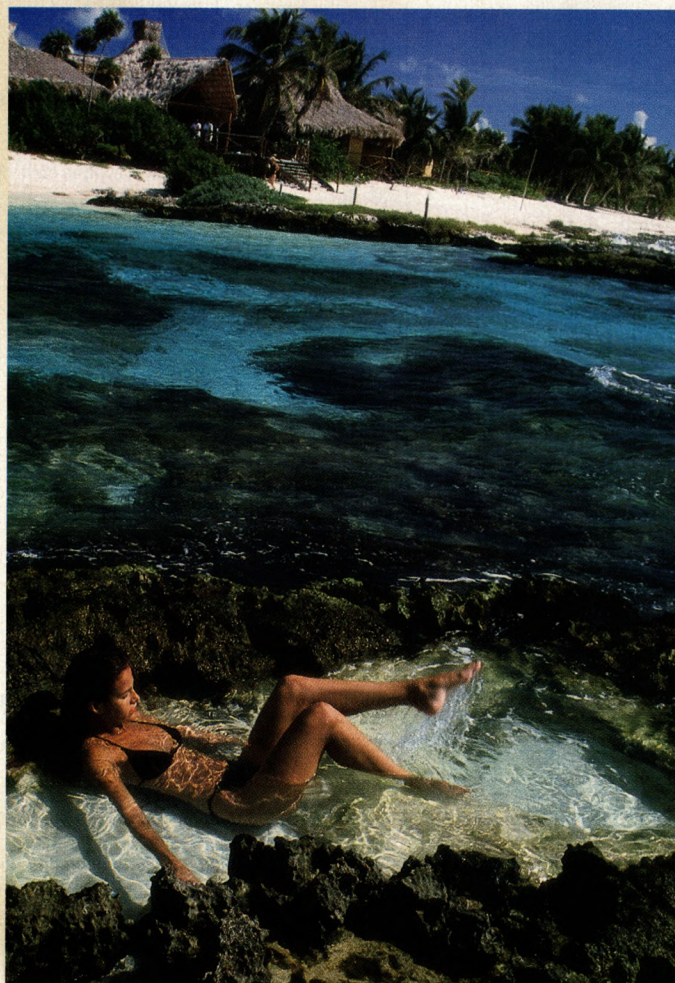
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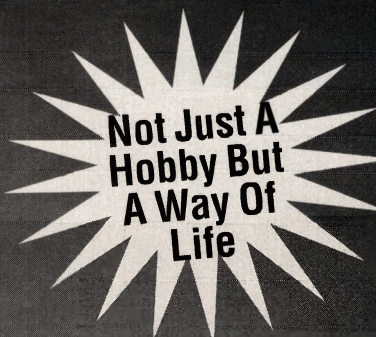
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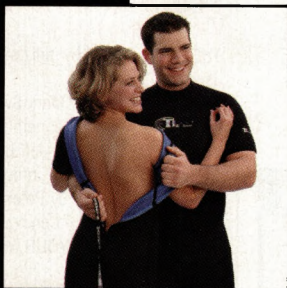


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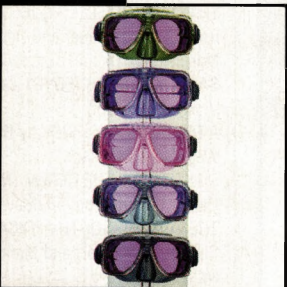
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**Skin Diver Backpack:** Quantities of the backpack are limited to the first 2000 entries. Any form sent without a sales receipt will not be accepted. This promotion ends June 1, 2002. All forms received through June 1, 2002 will be automatically entered into the grand prize drawing. **Grand Prize Drawing:** No purchase necessary to enter the grand prize drawing. Void where prohibited. To enter, send your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address on a 3" x 5" card to: Dive 44, attn: Backpack Promo, 16772 Channel Lane, Huntington Beach, CA 92649



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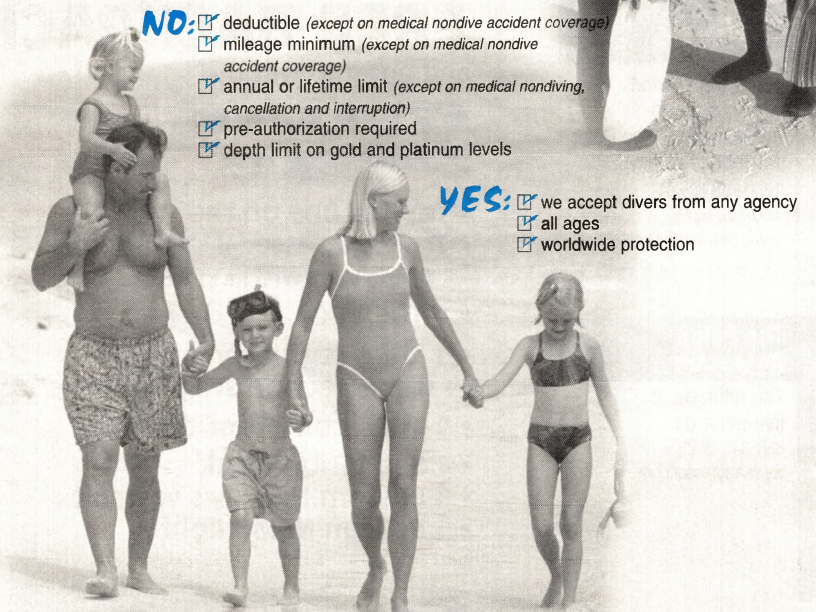
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# FREEFLOW

## In Memoriam: Suzanne Calley

ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2001, members of the tight-knit dive community in Monterey, CA, gathered along San Carlos Beach to say goodbye to a dear friend and fellow diver, Suzanne Calley.

Suzanne was onboard American Airlines flight #77, the plane that crashed into the

Pentagon on Tuesday, September 11th.

Suzanne and her family represent the many scuba community members whose lives changed forever by this senseless event.



James Taylor's 1969 song, "Fire and Rain" was played at the memorial service: *Just yesterday morning, they let me know you were gone. Suzanne the plans they made put an end to you.* Taylor's song continued, *...sweet dreams and flying machines and pieces on the ground.*

Attendees, many wearing dripping wetsuits from dives made in Suzanne's honor, stood quietly in the early evening fog and listened as others remembered her life. As a Monterey-based scuba instructor, Suzanne introduced many enthusiasts to the underwater world.

After all the words were spoken, attendees lit candles and silently looked out over the ocean. A sea lion appeared, swam parallel to the beach, then broke the silence with a series of loud barks directed at the crowd. After making a second tour of the group, it barked again, before disappearing under the waves.

"She loved this," whispered Suzanne's husband Frank, as he looked out over the bluff. "Diving to her was the most spectacular thing in the world." —Georgienne Bradley

A fund in Suzanne's name will benefit environmental moorings in the Monterey Bay Sanctuary and other coastal environmental projects. Proceeds from this editorial will be donated to the memorial fund. An additional contribution will be made by Skin Diver. Anyone interested in making a donation can call (831) 656-0454.

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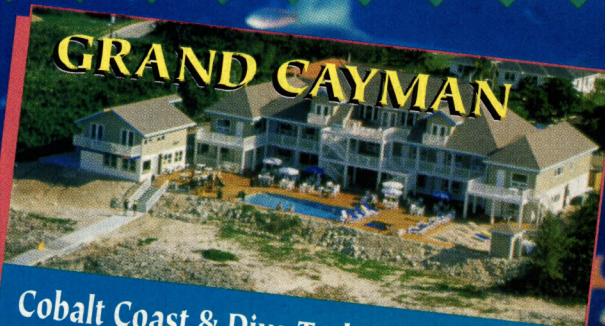
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I'VE WATCHED A COMPETITIVE RUNNER AND DEDICATED solo deep woods backpacker train in a local park, as he hurdles fallen trees, dances across rocks and splashes through creeks hardly slowing down. One day, I inquired about how he trains when he's out in the wild. "Do you run through the woods?" I asked.

"Are you kidding? I don't run when I'm on the trail. I don't jump. I walk. Only walk—slowly and carefully. And I never take a step without proper socks and my hiking boots on." Then he explained, "When you're miles away from help, your feet and legs are your life. Break an ankle and you're in trouble. At the very least, you're in for a long, painful experience hobbling out. At worst, like hiking in the winter, you may be so incapacitated that you won't last until someone finds you. You just don't put your feet at risk when you're that far out and they're your only way home."

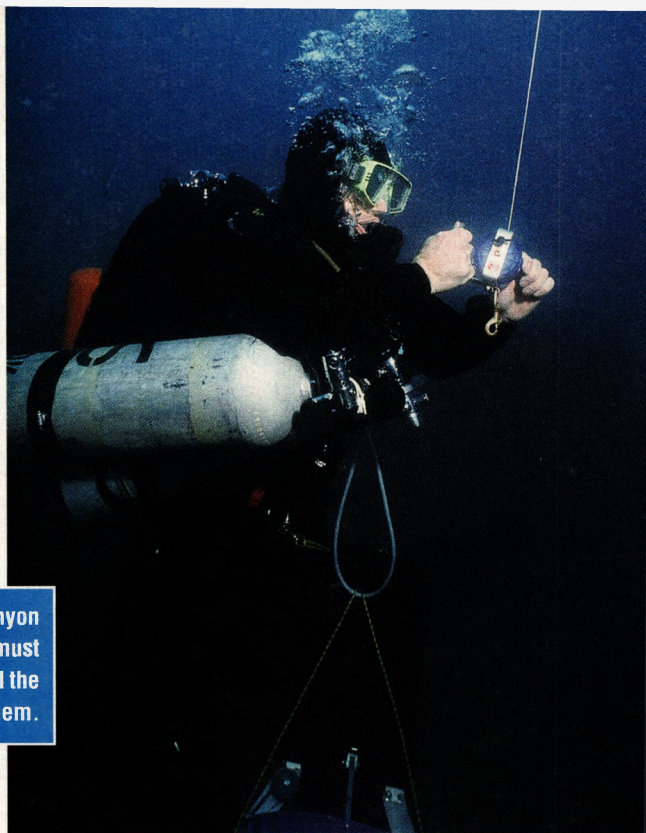
As he explained this, I realized that he manages foot risk much like I approach decompression sickness risk. I always dive conservatively, within accepted limits and follow accepted deco protocols, but other influences affect how much risk I'll tolerate.

For instance, suppose I'm considering a dive to 160 feet for 30 minutes using air. Desktop deco software with moderate conservatism calls for 71 minutes hang time, using air for decompression. But since air-only decompression isn't always as reliable as other deco procedures, I don't decompress using only air (except in an emergency). I don't tolerate this risk.

But I'd make the same dive using, for example, air on the bottom and decompressing with EAN50 (50 percent nitrogen, 50 percent oxygen) and oxygen. If I were within a couple hours of recompression, I'd typically follow the software schedule—about 31 minutes hang time. But if I were somewhere such as in the remote reaches of the South Pacific about 30 hours from recompression, I might follow the air schedule (71 minutes deco), but still use the EAN50 and oxygen. A DCS that's completely treatable within an hour may leave lifelong injury after 30 hours, so I tolerate less risk. And when I'm near recompression, I have to accept that any DCS hit can have permanent residual symptoms, even if treated immediately.

Now, suppose I'm looking at the same profile for a cave or wreck penetration, or for difficult conditions or performing a complex task. If that's the case, I don't tolerate the risk potential for narcosis. Instead, I'd opt for trimix (helium, oxygen and nitrogen), which would give 37 minutes hang time, decoing with EAN50 and oxygen. But helium is less forgiving than air deco-wise, so I'd use a somewhat more conservative schedule, and if I

Whether hiking the Grand Canyon or diving the Atlantic, you must understand your limits and the risks involved if you ignore them.



were a long interval from recompression, I'd be even more conservative. And, I'd also consider DCS predisposing factors, such as whether I'm rested and properly hydrated, etc.

Obviously, I don't expect to have a problem following even the least conservative procedures, just like my friend doesn't expect to break his ankle while training in the park. Otherwise, I wouldn't do it! Rather, as the consequences of DCS become more severe, prudence dictates further reducing the probability. But even then,

## DCS Risk Tolerance

BY KARL SHREEVES

you have to accept that there are no guarantees. You can still get bent on the most conservative profile, just like my friend can still break his ankle backpacking, even though he protects his feet so well.

Only you can decide how much risk you're willing to tolerate, then dive accordingly. Maybe you're the kind of person who won't even go to a city park without hiking boots. Maybe you're not. Either way, having decided, you have to accept the responsibility and consequences for the choices you make to manage your DCS risk. You can't blame anyone else for the consequences if your approach to DCS risk is like sprinting down Kilmanjaro in flip-flops. 🐟


*Karl Shreeves is an avid technical diver and VP, Technical Development for DSAT and PADI. He doesn't know much about backpacking, except that you don't do it in flip-flops.*



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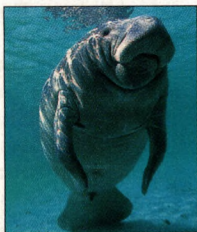
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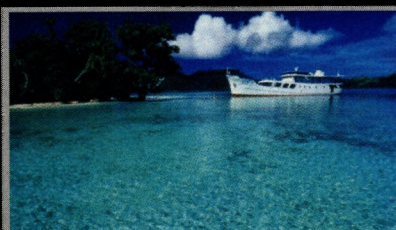
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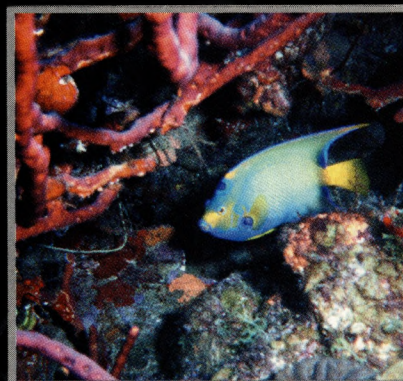
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# Banded Jawfish

BY NED AND ANNA DeLOACH WITH PAUL HUMANN

## ENCOUNTERS



This Banded Jawfish is in day four of a five-day hatching process, as evidenced by the silver, snap-like eyes that have developed inside the eggs.

### WHERE TO FIND THEM

*Found on sand flats in 3 to 40 feet of water in Florida, the Bahamas and Caribbean.*

ALTHOUGH BANDED JAWFISH ARE RATHER COMMON residents of the Caribbean, the 6- to 8-inch burrow builders require a bit of savvy to find. Small colonies of from 3 to 11 individuals live together on rocky sand flats, where they spend much of the day resting in the entryways of their rock-lined burrows. With only their camouflaged heads exposed, and sitting motionless, they blend like ghosts with the bottom.

Like all sand-flat residents, jawfish are wary. If approached rapidly, they slide inside their burrows and remain hidden for some time. However, a slow, low-profile approach will usually allow you to get to within 4 or 5 feet without sending your quarry underground. If you remain still for a while, the fish might even venture out and busy themselves spitting sand and rearranging rocks.

Within colonies, mating groups, consisting of a male and one or two females, live close together. The males, slightly larger than females, incubate two to four clutches of eggs inside their mouths each month from spring to early summer. Even though eggs might be present at any time, peak brooding periods begin after full moons. The eggs are held for five days before hatching as yolk-sac larvae.

The males...incubate  
two to four clutches of  
eggs inside their mouths

The approximate age of the clutches can be estimated by their color. Fresh clutches, heavy with yolk, are yellowish orange. On days two and three the eggs acquire a greenish hue, and finally, on day four they turn silver, as eye pigments, which are clearly visible through the transparent casings, begin to develop. At intervals throughout the incubation period, males partially spit the egg masses out and quickly suck them back in, a behavior known as churning. The rapid action removes waste, aerates the eggs, and allows the embryos to mix so all will have a chance to develop equally.

When finally ready, the tiny larvae, still inside their parents' mouths, wrestle free from the casings just before sunrise and drift off with the currents. Those few specks of life that survive their 18-day odyssey as plankton in open sea settle back to the sea floor. The tiny juveniles, less than an inch in length, immediately build miniature burrows, and for a brief period feed on drifting plankton before changing to an adult diet of bottom-dwelling invertebrates. 🐟



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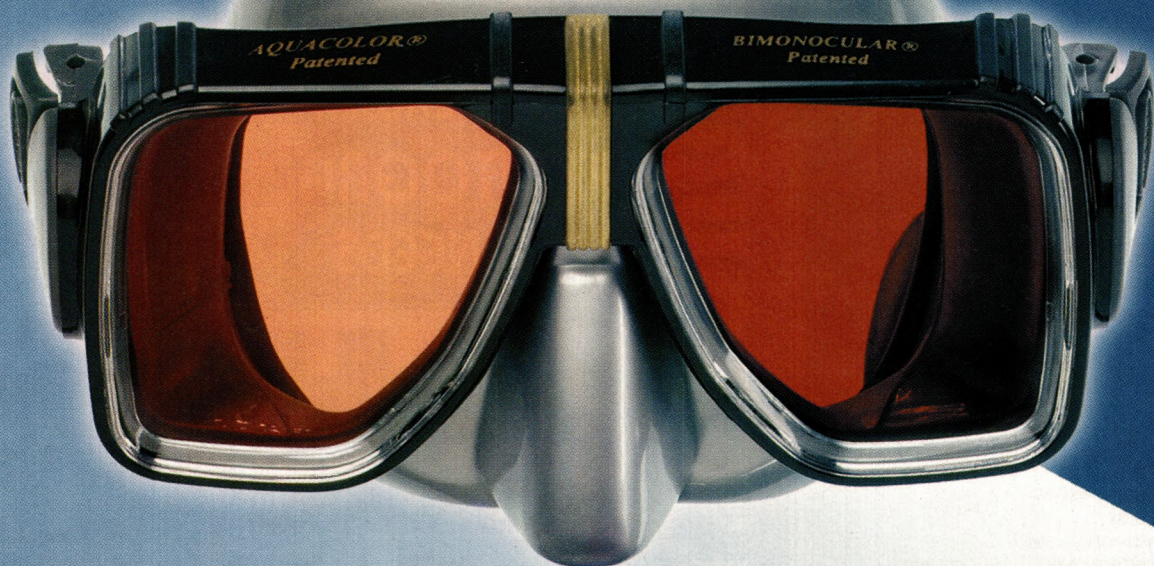
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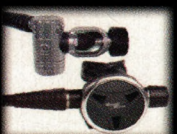
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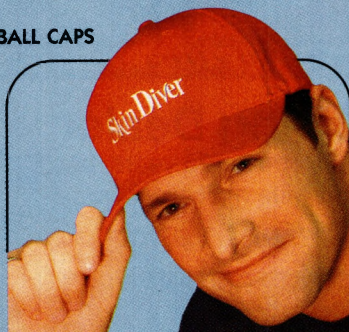
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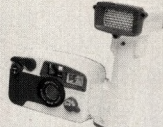
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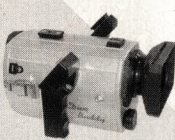
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September 2001

New Shark Dive - Cayman Gets Teeth! 8 Must-Have Dive Computers; The Future of Video-See Inside...; 700 Islands of Adventure - Our Guide to THE BAHAMAS; AROUND THE WORLD WITH STEVE, PART 2 - Visiting the Gray Gods of Tiki; THE BERMUDA FILES - Diving Wrecks for Clues; WHEN 1,000 WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH - How to Create Stories with Your Photos.

August 2001

Diving THE RING OF FIRE. Incredible Volcanic Islands of the Pacific - Hawaii, Indonesia, Borneo and more; Discover LITTLE CAYMAN'S Creatures Of The Sand; Diving All Night In Bonaire; INSIDE! Shoot Like A Pro - Advanced Photo Gear; Plus Special Insert - Southern Diver; WYLAND'S NEW COLUMN! Blue Adventures For Kids.

July 2001

PHOTO ANNUAL collectors edition 2001

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The Complete Guide to Buying Your FIRST U/W CAMERA; CAST AWAY - in the Untamed Paradise of Western Micronesia; TALES FROM THE WALL SIDE - Turks and Caicos; CAYMAN EXTREME - Tearing it to the Limit; THE OLD NAVY SHAKEDOWN - Searching for a Sweet Spot in the Florida Keys; Bonus 32-Page Section: Pacific Diver AND Pacific Dive Guide!

May 2001

BIG ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS - Humpbacks, Orcas, Great Whites, Manatees, Dolphins, Manta Rays; TAMING the Buoyancy BEAST; SEDUCED BY THE VIRGINS - The Ultimate USVI Dive Guide; MASTERCLASS - Eat Photo, Sleep Photo, Dive Photo; SPECIAL: Breathe Easy - 25 Low-Profile, Compact Regs.

April 2001

Family Diving - Grab the kids and go! Temples Above and Below - The Treasures of Belize and the Red Sea; Underwater Dreamscape - The Solomon Islands; 9 1/2 Weeks of Furballs and Fish on Bonaire; BONUS: SPECIAL 16-Page Equipment Guide INSIDE!

March 2001

THAT SINKING FEELING - NEW WRECKS TO EXPLORE - Bahamas, Cozumel, California; Forbidden & Mysterious - Diving Cuba!; EXCLUSIVE! David Doubilet Photo Essay: Ditch Your Tank - Snorkeling Techniques.

February 2001

Romantic Getaways Tahiti, St. Lucia, Hawaii, Belize  
FREE Southern Diver Edition Inside! start shooting! video gear primer; discovering the glory of galapagos; inside the art and mind of wyland; a pictorial dive guide of the cayman islands.

January 2001

50 - fiftieth anniversary issue collector's edition 2001; PLUS: Complete Reproduction of Skin Diver's First Issue Inside; Eric Hanauer - On The Pulse Of Diving For 50 Years; Jim Church - From Flashbulbs To Digital; Nick Icorn on the history of Dive Gear; Famous Alumni; Bonnie J. Cardone on the evolution of Dive Travel; The "Last Pinup" - Meeting Bettie Page.

December 2000

Jean-Michel Cousteau - A New Voice For The Cayman Islands; around the world with steve - A Three-Year Diving Odyssey; holiday gear guide - Cool Dive Stuff; diving the war torn pacific; Tek: Stop Decompression Boredom; Photography: The Blues; Reggae Reefs; Side-Gilled Sea Slug; Human Rights; BONUS! Caribbean Dive Guide & Ice Diving 101.

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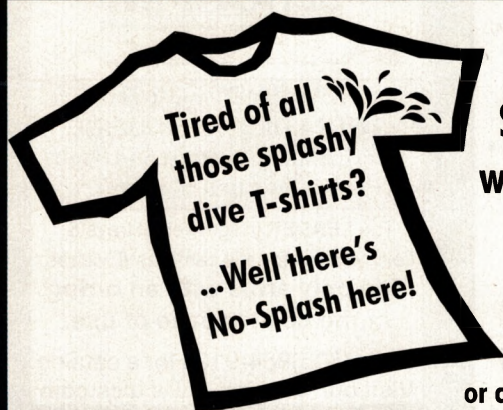
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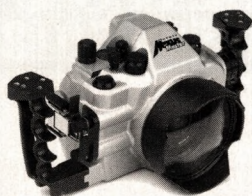
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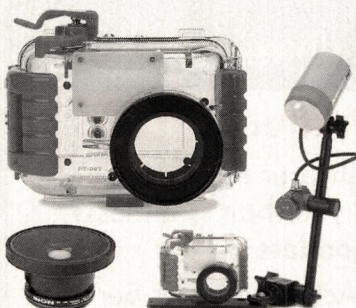
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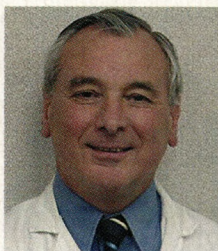
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**DIVERS WITH HIGH BLOOD** pressure may wonder if their blood pressure medication is safe to take when diving. The development of drugs to lower blood pressure is one of the major public health advances of the last century. We know that lowering blood pressure re-

duces the risk of serious complications from hypertension. If you are a diver with hypertension, you should be taking blood pressure medication, and you should continue to take the medication when on a diving trip. Blood pressure

medication an hour before diving, you might experience dizziness from low blood pressure when getting up from a sitting or stooping position on the dive boat. The solution is to spread the medications out, don't take all of them at once, and take them early enough so that the peak effect does not occur when you are diving. Although there are no serious problems with blood pressure medications and diving, a few possible concerns should be noted.

**Beta Blockers** block the effects of adrenaline on the heart. In high doses, they can reduce exercise capacity. The usual blood pressure dose will not affect your ability to dive, but they can cause constriction of blood vessels in the hands and feet. Some divers taking these medications notice cold hands and feet when diving. This is not a severe problem, but is often noticeable and occasionally uncomfortable.

**Diuretics** lower blood pressure by reducing the amount of salt and fluid in the body. They are usually well tolerated, but can aggravate

fluid loss in hot weather. If you are sweating or become dehydrated, it is best to avoid taking the diuretic until you return to a more temperate environment. Hot weather and exercise cause a loss of salt and water from the body that is equivalent to the effect of a diuretic.

**Calcium Channel Blockers** lower blood pressure by relaxing blood vessels. They also relax the muscle in the esophagus and stomach, allowing food to reflux back into the esophagus and cause heartburn that is aggravated by diving because there is no gravity effect on the stomach. You can avoid heartburn when diving by avoiding large meals beforehand, and by taking these medications early so their peak effects don't occur when you are diving.

If you have a blood pressure measur-

**If you are a diver with hypertension, you should be taking blood pressure medication...**

ing device, bring it on your trip. If your pressure is low, avoid the medications for a day and recheck your pressure. Medication is often needed to maintain good health when you have high blood pressure. The medications for high blood pressure cause little problem with diving and should be continued when on a diving trip. If necessary, modify the medication's schedule to fit your diving schedule. 🐠

*You can find more on diving medicine at [www.scubamed.com](http://www.scubamed.com).*

## Diving and Blood Pressure Medications

medications are generally safe to take when diving, but some precautions should be followed. Taking several blood pressure medications at the same time may lower your blood pressure too much. If you take all your medica-

Divers with high blood pressure can enjoy exhilarating dives like this one with proper precaution and medication.





# fiftieth

## milestones

### Team *Skin Diver*—Redesigning an Icon

WHILE THE WORD “TEAM” IS BANDIED ABOUT A LOT IN business, it usually gets lost in translation somewhere when credit is given (or accepted) for success. But in rare corners of the world, the term truly applies, and at *Skin Diver* it applies to the highest degree.

When Al Hornsby was brought aboard as Editorial Director in 1998 to redesign the magazine, he studied the marketplace and readership, then consulted heavily with the editorial, art and sales staff of the magazine. Every idea was weighed with the same merit, whether it came from the copy editor or the publisher. Al had noticed early on the passion each member of the staff felt not only for diving, but also for the product and for each other.

When the new design was launched in November 1998, the pride was palpable. The magazine was filled with what divers wanted—incredible images, writing that reflected the thrill, lifestyle and adventure of dive travel, the latest gear, environmental issues, photo tips and more. The bar had been raised, and the staff strives to raise it higher with each issue.

This mindset has led to some true milestones in dive publishing. During one editorial meeting, the idea of an issue dedicated entirely to photography came up. It had never been done, and the risks were significant: Would the readers like it? Would advertisers support it? Would any be sold off the newsstand? The staff decided to accept the risks and even upped the ante by making the issue oversized. The rest is history. When the July 2000 Photo Annual hit the street, it was called the single greatest dive magazine ever published.

The next step in *Skin Diver*'s evolution has come to be called, simply, “the DAN deal.” In short, *Skin Diver* joined

forces with the Diver's

Alert Network, which meant that not only would *Skin Diver* begin providing significant assistance to DAN's safety efforts, but the 150,000 plus DAN membership—the most active divers in the market—became *Skin Diver* subscribers. To kick-start the relationship, the staff created *Skin Diver*'s 50th Anniversary Issue as the first one that would be sent to the DAN members. Once again, the staff entered new territory. The January 2001 issue included a reproduction of the very first *Skin Diver*, and covered 50 years of diving history with stunning photos and stories from the magazine's archives. It became an instant collector's item.

In between each of these special issues, other editorial improvements were being made, too, such as the use of large editorial wells (consecutive features without advertisements) and photo essays. But, most importantly, old subscribers were returning to the magazine in droves. The most frequently received e-mail began, “I had let my subscription lapse until I saw a recent issue....” It was the highest praise the *Skin Diver* team could receive. As the magazine heads into its next 50 years, the *Skin Diver* team will continue to define the way the world looks at diving.

**Al Hornsby**, Group Publisher: A well-respected, 30-year veteran of the dive industry (as one of the principals at PADI for 20 years and President of DEMA), Al spearheaded the redesign and continues to hone and oversee *Skin Diver*'s growth from the top seat. A world-class underwater photographer in his own right, he has also been a contributor to *Skin Diver* since the late 1970s.

**Guy Miller**, Publisher: Guy, a 20-year dive professional, operated a high-profile dive operation in the Florida Keys for eight years, worked as Regional and National Sales Manager then Director of Sales for Scubapro, where he won awards for his leadership and team-building. His unflagging energy and belief in *Skin Diver*'s new look and feel is legendary. Guy holds instructor levels with every major certification agency and a 100-ton Master Captain's license.

**Ty Sawyer**, Editor: After seven years in the magazine's trenches, Ty took over the day-to-day editorial operation of *Skin Diver* as Senior Editor in December 1998, then was

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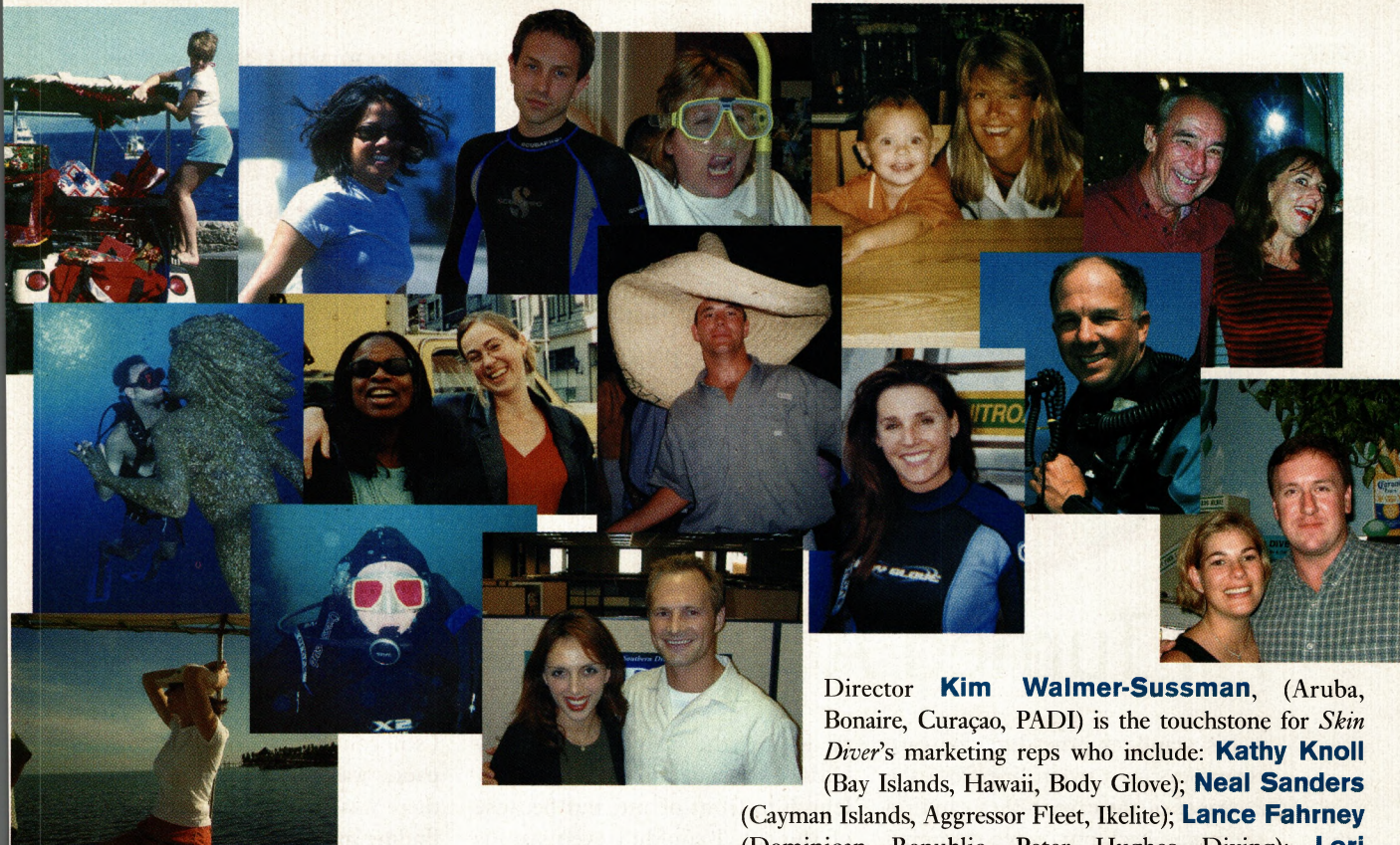
named Editor in April 2001. An avid diver since 1983, he has explored the underwater world from the Red Sea to the Caribbean to Australia and much of the diving in between. Ty cut his teeth in publishing as a writer and was first published at age 12. A poet of note, he has been listed in Who's Who and won numerous awards for his writing.

**Michelle Danner**, Managing Editor: There is only one reason the magazine actually makes it to press each month: Michelle. She manages all aspects of *Skin Diver*'s production from placement of ads and editorial to press concerns. She has won a *Folio* magazine award for excellence in publishing.

**Kimberly Richey**, Art Director: Kimberly, an 8-year design pro, is *Skin Diver*'s house magician. She molds the staff's rough and ragged ideas into the gems you see before you each month. Kimberly and her team have produced such groundbreaking designs as the 50th Anniversary Issue and the July 2001 Photo Annual.







**Daryl Carson**, Features Editor: Formerly the Editor of *ScubaTimes* and *DeepTech Journal*, Daryl joined *Skin Diver* when its parent company purchased those titles. His eye for story, innate sense of humor and in-depth knowledge of scuba diving and equipment made an immediate impact on *Skin Diver*. In addition, Daryl serves as Editor of *Skin Diver's* business-to-business journal, *Dive Report*, and is Editor of Skin Diver Online.

Issues don't just happen. They are born of the hard work and dedication of a team of co-workers. There is also an energetic cadre of workers that perform behind the scenes. You don't become the world's best read dive publication without the dedication, passion and enthusiasm of Assistant Editor **Tiffany Carey** (perhaps the most organized person alive), Copy Editor **Ryan Allen** (the valedictorian of the staff) and Editorial Assistant/Copywriter **Kyle Foster** (one of the most well-traveled and well-dived members of the *Skin Diver* crew).

And the great work of the art staff, Associate Art Director **Bernice Guevarra** and Art Designer **Jayde Ashlin**, turns all the disparate parts of words, images and adventure into an article that readers will respond to.

The sales staff, led by Guy Miller, are all alchemists in their own right, and each one possesses the Midas touch. (Listed here with some of their major accounts.) National Advertising

Director **Kim Walmer-Sussman**, (Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, PADI) is the touchstone for *Skin Diver's* marketing reps who include: **Kathy Knoll** (Bay Islands, Hawaii, Body Glove); **Neal Sanders** (Cayman Islands, Aggressor Fleet, Ikelite); **Lance Fahrney** (Dominican Republic, Peter Hughes Diving); **Lori Lachnicht** (Bahamas, Puerto Rico); **Lee Ann Zehnder-Wade** (Micronesia, Malaysia, Belize); **Vivian Williams** (many manufacturers and new clients); **David Wilkinson** (Florida, Cozumel, Draeger); and **Heidi Douglas** (Directory Sales). This group will be quick to point out that they can't do their jobs without the support of sales assistants **Jason Bukolt** and **Salomeh Semsar**. Trying to sneak a detail past them is like trying to sneak chum past a hungry shark. Also supporting the sales team are Advertising Art Director **Gail Hodge**, whose work elevates the advertising to art, and Ad Coordinator **Adam Greene**, who dives so frequently that a permanent set of wet footprints leads to his office. Finally, there is the Assistant to the Publishers **Tracey Ordway**, who manages to hold together the busy lives of Al and Guy with deceptive ease.

And certainly Field Editor **Marty Snyderman** and Environmental Editor **Jean-Michel Cousteau** lead the pack of "Who's Who" contributing editors whose work provides the backbone of each and every issue. These include Dive Med columnist Dr. Fred Bove, Totally Tek's Karl Shreeves, Newt Frontier's Dr. Phil Nuytten, Encounters' Denise Nielsen Tackett and Larry Tackett (Pacific marine life) and Ned and Anna DeLoach and Paul Humann (Caribbean marine life), Wreckfacts' Ellsworth Boyd, Blue Adventures for Kids' Wyland and renowned photo pro, Norbert Wu. 🐟

Top row, from left: Jean-Michel Cousteau and Al Hornsby; Ryan Allen, Ty Sawyer and Kimberly Richey; Kyle Foster; Bernice Guevarra; Jayde Ashlin; Gail Hodge; Kim Walmer-Sussman (with her son, Luke); Lori Lachnicht (with Neal Watson). Second row, from left: Guy Miller; Daryl Carson; Michelle Danner; Neal Sanders; Vivian Williams and Heidi Douglas; Lance Fahrney; Kathy Knoll; Marty Snyderman; David Wilkinson (with his wife, Jennie). Bottom row, from left: Tracey Ordway and Tiffany Carey; Lee Ann Zehnder-Wade; Adam Greene; Salomeh Semsar and Jason Bukolt.





## All Turned Around

It's standard procedure for cave divers to run a nylon line from the entrance of the cave so they can find their way back out, since dropping bread crumbs doesn't work particularly well in this scenario. The cave entrance was about 4 feet high and 20 feet wide. The passage dropped at about a 45-degree angle to around a 70-foot depth, where the cave opened up to a room about 6 feet high and 25 feet wide.

The cave's height varied from 2 feet to around 15 feet, and the main cave tunnel showed no signs of ending. Several tunnels branched off the main tunnel. There were a variety of interesting cave features, including silt-covered stalactites and stalagmites. We penetrated the cave with underwater scooters for 1,900 feet, then parked the scooters and our extra stage tanks at the end of the first line and proceeded to start an additional line.

We had installed only several hundred feet of new line deeper into the cave, when we reached our agreed upon air turn-around point and swam back to where the scooters were parked. The cave height was around 3 feet, and the visibili-

ty about the same. Steve, my buddy, was not more than a body length in front of me, but because of the silt, I couldn't even see his light. And at this point, my primary light went out.

The first thing I did was reach for the line...but it wasn't there. Because of the poor viz, I had been swimming within a foot or two of the guide line, but when I reached out, it wasn't where it was supposed to be. This was not the most desirable situation I could imagine. Pitch-black, 2,000 feet back in an uncharted cave with no guide line in hand.

Fortunately, my cave training took over, as I remembered not to thrash around, stirring up more silt and potentially floating farther away. I stayed fixed; with only a 3-foot ceiling, this was easy to do. And even though I didn't know where the line was, I knew it was only a few feet away. I got out my backup light, yet

A WHILE AGO, MY DIVING BUDDY AND I CAME ACROSS AN apparently unexplored underwater cave just off the east coast of Belize. The cave is near the border of Mexico and Belize, and could, in fact, cross the border of the two countries. Thus, it may be a truly international cave. We had previously spoken to local caretakers who were employed by the Belizean government, and they encouraged us to continue with our explorations, giving us permission to venture into areas that were off limits to boating and fishing, and showing us the locations of nine different cenotes (possible entrances to the cave). We had both participated in many cavern and cave dives in the past and were fully cave certified, so we decided to have a look around inside.

I still couldn't see the line. However, panic was not an option. I knew there was virtually no chance of me finding my way out of nearly a half-mile maze of cave tunnels without the line, so rather than swim in the

direction I thought would lead me out, I kept looking. Finally, after a few more minutes, I thought to look up. There, only a few inches above my head, was the line. Relieved, I began following it to catch up with my buddy.

After a while, I noticed an arrow I had placed on the line earlier, and based on the direction in which it was pointing, I was swimming back into the cave. I turned around and eventually came upon Steve who had been waiting for me by the scooters, before starting back to see if there was a problem. 🐟

—SCOTT BONIS

### I Learned...

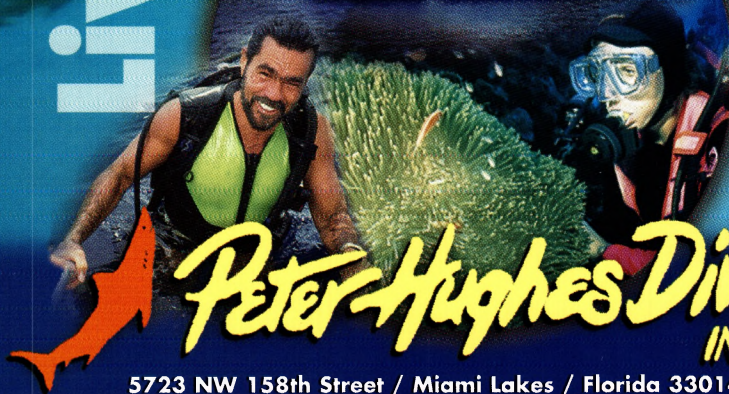
- Never make a dive that exceeds your level of training or experience.
- Don't panic. Instead, decide on a course of action and carry that action out calmly and methodically.
- When cave diving, think about your exit when you enter. Leave markers, use conservative air planning, and remember your training to guarantee a successful dive.

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